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RADAMA II. AND HIS QUEEN.

MISSIONS AND MARTYRS

IN

MADAGASCAR.

WITHDRAWN

And I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, and white robes were given unto every one of them.—Rev. vi. 9–11.

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PREFACE.

J. M. 11-19-86

For one-third of a century Madagascar has been, to the civilized world, the sealed land of tragic interest. That the Gospel had obtained a footing there, that the late cruel monarch was exerting all her power to destroy it, and that scenes of sublime faith and fortitude were being exhibited by the martyrs, was known; but beyond this all was concealed beneath the impenetrable vail of secrecy and non-intercourse with the rest of the world within which the island was shrouded.

But the vail has at length been lifted. The tyrant is dead, and we are permitted to visit again that remarkable country, and learn from the survivors of her cruelty the thrilling tale of their sufferings. It is a new chapter of the triumphs of Christianity over its persecutors, and can not fail to be welcome to those who love to trace the evidences of its divine origin, and the sure protection afforded it by God's gracious Providence.

The authorities which have been consulted in the preparation of the work have been chiefly the writings of the missionaries, Rev. Messrs. Ellis, Freeman, and Johns, and especially a volume from the Mission House of the London Missionary Society, by Mr. Prout, entitled, "Madagascar, its Mission and Martyrs."

ED.

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MISSIONS AND MARTYRS

IN

MADAGASCAR.

CHAPTER I.

THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE.

Situation of Madagascar — Dimensions — Central Mountains — Forests — Vegetation — The Lowlands — The *Hovas* — *Sakalavas* — *Betsileos* — *Betanimenas* — Wood-cutters — Charcoal-burners — Slaves.

Far away in the Indian Ocean, opposite Mozambique on the African coast, lies a long island, larger than England and Ireland together. It began to attract the world's notice in the time of Columbus.

Stand upon its central hights, and see what this island of Madagascar is like. Here is its greatest width, — three hundred miles. Far to the north and south, a stretch of nine hundred miles altogether, you see long mountain-ranges, which end in precipitous cliffs at the extremities of the island. Arms or spurs are thrown out toward the coast on

either side, some of them fairly reaching into the ocean, others abruptly cut off, or sinking into gentle slopes long before they get to the sea.

Although you already stand six thousand feet above the ocean, on these hights of Ankovy, you may look away on either hand and see mountains rolling beyond and above, — mountains in long, blue ridges, — till, in the distance, you descry the peak of Ankaratra with its head in the clouds, six thousand feet above you, wearing sometimes an icy crown. And this in the latitude of Central Africa! But, on these lower ranges whence you look, the climate is like the soft summer air at home, and the granite rocks that start out from the green herbage, help the illusion. Here, in Ankovy, the mountains are spread out into broad table-lands and rolling hills, affording little else than stunted fig-trees; but the vales below give growth to extensive forests of ebony and mango-trees. Upon the very edges of cliffs that jut into the valley, or upon the crown of precipitous hills which rise, solitary, out of it, are perched villages that defy the approach of an enemy.

Lower down than this, imagine the island encircled by a forest nearly forty miles wide, running riot over mountains and valleys, plains and ravines alike, and hiding within itself such a chaos of rock

and wilderness that one might readily believe it a vast barricade, thrown up by besieged mountain giants. Tree ferns, tall bamboos, and huge old trees that have seemingly grown and grown since the world began, make up this magnificent girdle.

Still farther down, imagine continuous terraces, lower ranges of hills, and valleys covered with the vegetation of everlasting summer; vines that grow and twist till no one can find out where they begin or end; gorgeous flowers, each large enough and beautiful enough for a royal baby's bonnet; trees that shoot far up towards the clouds, and then burst into a cluster of nodding plumes, or spread themselves out like a gigantic fan. The whole is a covert for chattering monkeys and paroquets, and a home for birds, so brightly colored that you might think the flowers had taken wings. Caves are hidden in the thickets, and cataracts dash over rocks, unseen till you stand on their banks; and, in the sluggish reaches of the rivers, crocodiles wait in the shaded nooks for prey.

Looking still farther down at the foot of these magnificently clad hills, we see them nearly girt with a plain, alternately broad and narrow, as it meets the outlying mountain spurs. On one side of the ranges it is dotted with a long chain of lakes, and on the other, ribboned with rivers which

wind, some of them, a hundred miles across the plain into the sea.

These wet and hot lowlands are loaded with luxuriant vegetation. Even the fallen logs give abounding life to a crowd of blooming parasites. Orchids, with large cream-colored flowers, sit triumphant on the topmost branches of bare, dead trees. Ferns cluster about prostrate trunks, hiding decay with their long drooping wings of green. Creepers are every where, swinging from one tall plant to another, and tying every thing together as if in a spirit of mischief. Out of all the matted mass rises the massive foliage of the mango-tree, the towering cocoa-palm, or the shining magnolia, tempting you with shade and rest. But sleep is not safe in this poisoned atmosphere; a deadly miasma rises from the rank vegetation.

Parts of the coast-lands lie below the level of the ocean, but are protected from the overflow of the surf by a belt of sand-hills. You need not strain your sight across that wide stretch of ocean, thinking to catch a glimpse of Africa, for it is three hundred miles away, at the nearest point. Thus lapped in the ocean, skirted with burning sand, its lower hills glorying in tropical luxuriance, and its crowning mountains of granite and iron

rising into the regions of sleet and ice, lies the land of the RADAMAS.

Now let us stand on these same hights of Ankovy, and see who and what are the people. This central province is the most important one of the island, although the most sterile. Here is the capital and here the king. Civilization has begun to flourish, aided by law and by example, European residents choosing the place because of the salubrity of its climate. The people are called *Hovas.* They are enterprising, industrious, and shrewd. When not affected by mixture with other tribes, they are more like the Caucasian race than any other inhabitants of Madagascar. They are rather below medium stature, but are lithe and graceful, with soft curling hair, thin lips, and light olive complexions, being fairer often than the inhabitants of southern Europe. But other races have intermarried or become residents, and give a mixed population to the province of Ankovy. They all, however, bear the name of Hovas. They are not a numerous nor a warlike people, but, by the shrewd generalship of their king, and the use of English fire-arms, to which they held exclusive right, they conquered the principal of the twenty-two provinces which originally composed

Madagascar, and united them in one kingdom, subject to Radama.

Look away now to the west and the north, over a wide country reaching from Ankovy to the sea, so fertile that its people have only to pluck and eat. These are the *Sakalavas*, indolent in peace, but energetic and bold in war. Although dark as night, and having the crisped hair of the negro, their features are regular. Tall, straight, muscular, with a firm, bold step and unembarrassed manner, a keen eye, and open manly countenance, they constitute the finest race in Madagascar. They have given proof of the best mental powers; and when civilization shall develop them, and when the gospel enables them to rise to their true superiority, they will doubtless become the masters of the island.

Now, turn to the south; beyond the blue mountains of Ankaratra, and at their base, nestles the province of the *Betsileos*. Separated by these natural barriers from Ankovy, and isolated from the people of the coast by a wide desert, they see little of the busy throngs between the seaports and the capital. The chance sight of a European fills them with simple wonder. They peacefully cultivate their lands, care for their cattle, and weave the long silk scarfs worn by the Hovas.

Leading a quiet patriarchal life, they make no progress beyond their ancestors, living and dying exactly as their fathers did, centuries ago. In person, they are copper-colored, heavy featured, and slight in stature.

Down on the eastern coast is the province of *Betanimena*, including a district of thicket and forest, of sand and marshes, of lowlands and mountains. The people are next the Hovas in complexion and feature, and, though stronger, are more indolent. They are, however, more cleanly in their habits. From this province, the coolies or burden-bearers are obtained to carry merchandise or other burdens from the coast to the capital.

These, then, are the four distinct classes in Madagascar, — the Hovas, the Sakalavas, the Betsileos, and the Betanimenas, with every shade of color between black and light olive, but each, as tribes, retaining distinct peculiarities. Unitedly, they are called the *Malagasy*.

But we have not yet noted all the people of this strange island. Further south, and on the coast, is the province of Matitanana, chiefly settled by Arabs who for centuries have traded with the Malagasy. Divinations, charms, fortune-telling, and similar superstitions have, from time immemorial, prevailed among them to such an extent, that

every act of a Malagasy, from his birth to his death, is regulated by these rites.

Cast your eye back again to the boundaries of Ankovy, and look into the great forests that surround it. There live the wood-cutters, whose occupation never changes. Generation after generation they follow the same pursuits, live in the same huts, and learn just as much as their progenitors, hundreds of years ago. Their possessions can not increase, for, though they are reckoned freemen, they receive no pay for their labor. They hew for the king, and if they attempt escape, are pursued by soldiers and shot as criminals. The name of "The seven hundred" is given them. In the same forests are also the charcoal-burners, who, like the wood-cutters, follow the same occupation through life, and are forced to give their services to the government. Among the mountains, or scattered through the towns, or sometimes composing a village by themselves, are miners, iron-workers, and carpenters, who are also required to serve the king, without pay, and to bequeath their employment to their children. No one can obtain their services without the king's orders, nor indeed dream of requiring them to work, for every man, with his own hands or by his slaves, forges his own

tools, builds his house, or his ship, and hunts and weaves for himself.

Below this class are the slaves. You may cast your eyes over the length and breadth of Madagascar, and find no spot free from the blight of domestic slavery. The bondmen are not a distinct race. The Hovas, the Betsileos, and the Sakalavas alike share in this lowly condition, each in turn made captives in war, and reduced to slavery as the penalty of becoming prisoners. Crimes are also punished by depriving the criminal of all his possessions, and making him and his descendants slaves forever. Sometimes, also, the Malagasy sell themselves and families for debt. Their condition, however, is less hard than that of the American slave.

This, then, is the nation which for hundreds of years has bowed to idols and put its trust in charms, but which, during the last half-century, has caught the spirit of the world's progress, and is now advancing toward a decent civilization. Above all, it has been honored by the presence of the Gospel, and consecrated by the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE COAST TO THE CAPITAL.

Tamatave — Domestic Habits of the People — Slave-Traders — Journey to the Capital — King's Permission required — The Sikidy — Palanquins — Beauty of the Country — The Traveler's Tree — Palm Trees — Weeping-place of the Hovas — Villages — Granaries — Tananarivo — The King — Reception at the Palace — No Sabbath — No Worship — Malagasy Gods.

THE most convenient entrance to Madagascar is by the seaport of Tamatave, on the eastern coast. Landing there in 1808, the first year of the first king Radama's reign, you would have found a village composed of huts built of bamboo, the roofs made of the leaves of the traveler's tree, and the floors of strips of bark from the same tree. These houses have neither chimneys nor windows, so that you must endure smoke with patience, and depend upon the crowing of the cock in the corner to know when it is daylight. You will get no breakfast, for no one eats breakfast in Madagascar; but, judging by the sun when it is noon, the family then gather and seat themselves upon mats on the floor, on the west and north side of the fireplace. Bad luck would attend them the rest of the day

if they sat elsewhere,—so they think. Then a slave goes around pouring water from a horn upon the hands of each person. In the midst of the group on the floor, is a stool about a foot high, supporting a dish on which is placed the dinner, consisting of rice. An invitation to dine means an invitation to eat rice with your host. If there happens to be a piece of meat, it is laid on the top of the rice; or if locusts, crocodile's eggs, silkworms or fruit,—all the same,—they are laid on the rice. Earthenware basins, of native make, may possibly be placed on the floor for plates, but much more likely a broad fresh leaf answers the purpose. There is just one knife in the house to cut the meat, but no forks at all; the fingers being made to do the service of both. When every one has finished, water is poured into the pan in which the rice was cooked, and is boiled until discolored by the burnt rice. This, to them, delicious beverage, is passed to each person in the same basin. Then occurs the final ceremony of rinsing the mouth by pouring water from a horn into it, no one being allowed to touch the horn with his lips.

Precisely the same ceremonies accompany the evening meal, and the evenings are spent in dancing, or smoking hemp, or sucking snuff, which is deposited under the tongue. The poorer people

suspend their snuff-box from the neck or girdle. Persons of rank have a bearer or slave who carries the box, which consists of a short piece of bamboo, beautifully polished, and sometimes ornamented with silver rings, and a gay silk tassel fastened to the neatly-fitting lid. The slave removes the lid and gives the cylinder to his master, who tosses a small quantity of the snuff into his mouth. Some of the villagers play at the game of "kicking backwards," and others throw bamboos at a target. The children sport with tops and jackstones, and teach beetles to fight.

But you have not yet seen all of Tamatave. There are some better houses belonging to the traders, who supply French and English ships with cargoes of slaves. These are obtained from all the provinces of Madagascar, but principally from Ankovy, in exchange for goods or money. Besides this, the traders employ robbers, who live in the caves up in the forests and mountains, and who seize all the people they can waylay, and convey them to Tamatave. The traders sometimes lend a small sum of money to a salable looking man, ask twice its amount in interest, and, if he can not immediately pay it, take his body in payment, handcuff him, and stow him away, with hundreds of others in those warehouses yonder, till ready

to put him into some ship's hold. Another mode is to invite a company of innocent ones, with generous hospitality, and, in the midst of the entertainment, drop a trap-door and let them fall into a pit, where they are safely secured till they can be sent to a ship. These were the representatives of the civilized world in Madagascar, in 1808!

If one wishes to leave this wretched village and go to Tananarivo, the capital of Ankovy and the only large town in Madagascar, it is necessary to send to the king for permission to enter his domains. Receiving this, natives are hired to carry the burdens, and four carry the traveler in a palanquin, or chair, supported on their shoulders. They have no carriages, never saw a horse, and if they had either, would find it difficult to get them over the swamps and lakes and steep mountains which are to be traversed.

Before they start on the long journey, they must consult the "sikidy," — a kind of divination that reveals to them upon what day they should set out; and they must also wear an "ody" or charm upon the person, in which they trust for preservation from sickness or calamity by the way.

When at last all are ready, the cavalcade files out of Tamatave, toils through a swamp and forest filled with gorgeous flowers, then down rivers,

across lakes, rice-fields, and through villages on the banks, till one is wearied with the jolting movement of the bearers and continual changing from boat to palanquin, and is glad to accept the hospitality of any native. This must be given with a good grace, for the king requires it. Sometimes he journeys in disguise, to ascertain how travelers are received, and punishes the inhospitable. But you must wait for the hour of the meals to come about, be you never so hungry. While you wait, you can watch the slave-girls drawing water. One well serves for many families. For a bucket, a bullock's horn is used; and a string made of bark is the handle. It is lowered by hand, and when the horn comes up, trickling with its contents, you wonder where are the water-jars. Those bamboo canes, six or eight feet long, closed at one end, answer the purpose. No matter if it takes time to fill them, for nobody hurries in Madagascar. Each girl, after she fills her two elongated buckets, shoulders them and marches off with horn, rope, and all. If, in the evening, you choose to visit the chief of the village, you will be escorted home by slave-boys bearing a rude lantern, who make your way merry with the music of a native jew's-harp and little drum. Guests are always thus honored.

The next day's journey is through a country that grows more magnificent at every step. Even the ditches in the villages are overgrown with rare plants and flowers, such as grace the conservatories of English lords; and the trees offer fruits that make one loiter to taste. In passing the streams, you wonder at patches of delicate green lace, just beneath the surface. Lifting one, you find it to be a cluster of broad leaves, forming a circle of two or three feet, each leaf being an airy skeleton of thread-like fibers, "woven after a most regular pattern so as to resemble a piece of bright green lace or open needle-work." Their color is of every shade from pale to dark olive-green, deepening to brown and black.

If you are overcome with heat and thirst, you have only to rest under the shade of the traveler's tree; one of those straight trees that crown all the hills about you, rising thirty feet without a branch and spreading out like a fan at the top. Each tree has only twenty-four leaves, but each leaf is six feet from base to tip, and the stem of equal length. This stem forms a canal which conducts the rain from the leaf to a cavity near its union with the trunk, thus making twenty-four cisterns, each holding nearly a quart of pure water. The native has only to pierce it with a spear and a

fountain gushes forth. How wise and good is the Creator who thus provides for the wants of his creatures! But the Malagasy only thank their "ody" for it. This is not all its use. These same leaves make an excellent water-proof covering for the goods carried, and if one needs an impromptu house, the stems can be quickly made into walls, — the leaves answer for the roof, and the bark for the floor. The leaves are large enough, too, to serve for a table-cloth, strong enough for dishes, and are often folded into shape for spoons and cups.

Rest beneath these trees is doubly grateful, because you are dizzy and weary and sore, with being tipped about in the palanquin as the bearers climb the slippery hills, and trot down into the muddy dales, which follow each other in so close a succession that, but for the wonders of the road-side, you would be reminded of the sea and a plunging ship. These large palm-trees disappear after two or three days' journey, and you will see them far below and behind you as you climb loftier hills. How happy now, if one had only to enjoy the beauty of the flowers, the gracefulness of the feathery bamboo, the richness of cultivated spots, the sublime sight of the blue mountains rising into the clouds in the distant west, the luxuriant slopes

bending down to the east, and, at their feet, the rolling sea stretching away into the far line of the horizon. Happy, indeed! but for these toiling creatures bearing the palanquin, as dark in soul as in body, and that host coming down from the mountains, chained together and bearing heavy burdens upon their heads, — two thousand of them! What an army, to go at once into the suffering to which they are destined! This spot, where they first catch sight of the sea, may well be called the "Weeping-place of the Hovas," for that sea will soon lie between them and their native land. And so all along the way, in companies of from fifty to two thousand, you meet these wretched captives! How they came through that terrible belt of forest, is a mystery, for your bearers, if you can trust them, must climb the face of steeps by clinging to roots and branches of trees, and must toil over rocks and along paths that lead through holes filled with water, or down into wet and slippery ravines which, every moment, threaten your fall.

It is just here, when most needed, that the king's messengers begin to welcome you and bring fresh provisions. At last this dreary forest is left behind, the cooler hights are reached, lovely vales bend between the green hills, vast fields of rice

wave by the way-side, groves of great beauty occur here and there, and villages multiply every where, perched on the cliffs, with paths winding across the ditches, up the steeps, and through the gateway in the wall which invariably surrounds the villages in Ankovy. They are fortresses, every one of them, and by this you may know you are among the Hovas. The houses are crowded together and there is hardly room for the palanquin to be carried between them. They are better than those in the provinces below, in having windows and in being built of clay or stone. There are two apartments also.

Do not be alarmed because the reception-room is already occupied. There, in one corner, is a pen for lambs, in another a pen for calves, and in a third are the ducks and chickens. Pass to the inner room where the husband is cooking the rice, and the wife sitting at a loom, weaving a silk *lamba*, which will be exceedingly pretty when it gets out of that queer fixture of sticks driven into the ground. The wife welcomes the guest by untying the loom, pulling up the sticks, rolling up the lamba and placing it in her rush basket, thus putting out of sight her occupation, and devoting herself to the service of the comer. Who could desire her to be more politely hospitable?

The chief of the village, and some of the people, will bring presents of fowl or rice or fruit, which must not be refused; and before night a crowd of persons, much fairer than those in the province below, come to talk about the countries and people across the ocean, and to ask intelligent questions concerning all in your possession that is novel.

Another day's journey takes you through a country of low hills and wide valleys covered with long grass or waving with rice-plants. Huge blocks of granite crop out here and there. Houses are frequent, and sometimes there is one of two stories, and the occupants come out upon a sort of parapet to see the strangers passing. Near the houses are frequently tall granaries, looking quite like old-fashioned bee-hives that had taken a fancy to grow to a gigantic size, because the trees did so. A round hole at the top is the entrance, and a ladder outside affords access to it. When rice is wanted from it, a young slave-boy is let down into it, fills a basket, and is drawn up again. Other granaries are deep holes in the ground, with a mound of clay for the opening. If some timid mother takes you for a slave-dealer, she will hide her children here till the "cannibal" has passed;

for she believes, in her heart, that the children are stolen to be eaten.

Yonder is the village of Ambatomanga, upon the summit of a cliff rising precipitously, four hundred feet from the valley. Like all the villages, wide ditches and a mud wall enclose it. Clusters of trees adorn it, and the houses, with their steep, narrow roofs, thatched with grass, and rafters projecting like horns at the gables, give it a strange aspect. On one side of the village, a mass of granite rises two hundred feet, and upon its very top is a solitary stone house. Passing it, you wind along a rolling plain somewhat resembling a prairie. Trees seem to have vanished altogether.

At last, out of the valley rises an oval hill, a mile and a half long, and five hundred feet above the plain. Upon its rocky sides and summit is Tananarivo, "city of a thousand towns." Two irregular and difficult paths wind from the north and the east up the hill and through the place. On "the crown of the town" stands the palace of Radama, surmounted by a golden eagle with outspread wings, and in a line on either side stand the houses of the royal family, of the many wives of the king, and of the officers of the court. Below these, on narrow terraces, are the houses of the people, built chiefly of wood, thatched with

grass, and indicating, by the length of the rafters, the rank of the occupant. The doors always face the west.

Long before you reached the city, messengers, with a palanquin from the king, had been sent to bear you; and now, at the foot of the hill, the stranger is met by officers of the court and an escort of dancing soldiers, and conducted up to the court-yard of the palace, which is crowded with singers and shell-blowers to honor the arrival.

Radama I. stands upon the balcony, dressed in a costume half native, half Arab. He is not over five feet in hight, is slender in figure, has small hands and feet, light olive complexion, black curling hair, an oval, smiling face and full under-lip. In his reception, you are astonished to find him a gentleman. Easy and unembarrassed in manner, cordial and agreeable in conversation, which is carried on through an interpreter, you feel that he is not a savage.

Radama leads the way to a room lined with muskets, and himself seated on a kind of throne, offers you a stool covered with a white linen cloth. His ministers occupy mats upon the floor. You are puzzled to know the rank of the persons about you, and find that honor is bestowed by number; so that if you are presented to a major in

the army, you salute "Honor the 7th;" or a Field-Marshal, "Honor the 13th," which is the highest. Civil officers receive the same numbers in the same order. The Malagasy word for honor signifies, "flower of the grass;" so that they must be perpetually reminded of its fleeting nature.

The king assures his visitor again and again of his delight at receiving him, and, to prove it, sends immediately to have a house — yes, two or three houses — prepared for his immediate occupation. Do not imagine that, because a house is so easily built in the lower provinces, it can be spirited into existence so quickly here, for your comfort. There are no trees for the purpose, within forty miles, and every plank or unsplit tree must be dragged by men the whole distance. And these men are not the "seven hundred" that live in that great belt of forest, but the people of a district, or even whole village, who are commanded to go forth and draw timber for the king, for which service they neither expect nor receive pay. So be merciful, and accept what is offered. One house is for your drawing and sleeping-room, a second for stores, and the third serves for the kitchen.

When fairly established, you are the recipient of as many gifts as ever bewildered a clergyman at a donation-party. Everybody is ready to oblige

you; but your offer of money is received with doubt and shyness, lest you may prove, after all, a kidnapper. But, whoever comes, a black slave or a high officer of the court, a woman from the market-place, or a princess from the palace, — every one wears the same style of robe called the lamba. It is generally three or four yards long and two or three wide, is thrown gracefully over the shoulders, and hangs in loose folds nearly to the feet. A man throws it chiefly over the left, and a woman over the right shoulder. Its material and dimensions differ according to the rank of the wearer; those of the nobles being made of pure silk and of brilliant colors, while the poorer people made them of white cotton, or of coarse cloth manufactured from the banana or rofia tree. Thus you know precisely the grade of your visitor.

As the days go by, and no Sabbaths come, you wonder where is the people's God. Is there never any rest from labor and never any worship? Not an act of worship, even to an idol, did you see in the whole journey. To be sure, the bearers consulted the diviners, and exhausted your patience in counting and dividing beans, or sticks, or stones, to find out the lucky day for starting. They were careful to make an address

to the crocodiles before crossing a lake or river, assuring them of having never done them harm; and they took pains to sit and sleep according to certain points of the compass. If commencing a house, the builder did not fail to begin it on a lucky day, and at the sacred northeast corner; in all this, there was only superstition, — no act of true worship.

If you could be admitted to one of the sacred villages, where the idol of the district is kept, you might see the house and speak to the keeper, but neither you nor the people would be allowed to look upon the idol, which is always covered by a scarlet cloth, even when carried in public. Any one who desires a favor of the idol, leaves an offering with the keeper. If you ask those simple slaves, carrying burdens, who made all things, they will tell you God. Or if you converse with one of the king's ministers, you will find that he appeals to God, and blesses in the name of God. At the same time, you will discover that he calls his king the "visible God," and the book in your hand he will regard as God, because of its wonderful ability to speak to you without being heard. Rice and silk are indispensable to the comfort and enjoyment the Malagasy, therefore they are gods. Whatever fills them with awe or admiration, is a

god. Even the velvet you have brought as a present to the king excites wonder and admiration, and is styled the "son of god."

"Oh that they knew the one living God and his son Jesus Christ, that they might not perish, but have everlasting life!" is your earnest wish as they cluster around you. You long to bring the gospel quickly, that this great darkness may be dispelled from the minds of the people, and the chains of the oppressed be broken. God does not now work miraculously, but by means of his own people; and, we shall see how he will lead men to prepare the way and make *the paths straight*, that Christ may come in his glory; and see how he will use Radama, as an ax, to hew down the trees of iniquity that overshadow the nation.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST INTERCOURSE WITH EUROPEANS.

Radama I. — His character — Attempts to convert him to Romanism — His Talents and Energy — The Isle of Mauritius — Embassy from Gov. Farquhar to Radama — Mr. Hastie — Efforts to abolish the Slave Trade — Treaty with the English — Slave-Traders' Deputation from Mauritius — They announce the Abrogation of this Treaty — Re-establish the slave-trade — Radama's Indignation — Arrival of English missionaries — Settle at Tamatave — Their murder — Return of Gov. Farquhar to Mauritius — Mr. Hastie sent again to Radama — Joy of the latter.

RADAMA the First, as you have just seen him in the beginning of his reign, was but sixteen years old; only a "beardless youth," as the chieftain of another province scornfully termed him. His morals were so pure that his father deemed it a sign of feeble character, and persons were employed to entice him into vice, as a necessary preparation to govern a people who were very licentious and deceitful. Thirst for glory and renown actuated him from the moment he became the chief of Ankovy. His father's last charge to him was to possess himself of the whole island of Madagascar, and reign supreme over it; and the frequent accounts he received from the French

traders of Napoleon's brilliant career, fired this ambition so early planted.

The only communication Radama had with the civilized world, during the first eight years of his reign, was through the English and French slave-traders. The latter, at an early date, occupied the southeast province of Anosy, where they now have important settlements. Catholic priests, through this channel, attempted to convert Radama and his people, but the offer of the crucifix was to them but an "ody" in a new shape; and the conduct of the traders did nothing towards recommending a new religion to the respect of the high-minded chief.

Radama possessed sound judgment and shrewd foresight, and was quick to perceive what it was desirable to copy, and what to obtain from his foreign visitors. He learned to write his own language in the Arabic character, and to write French in Roman letters. Fire-arms were among his first purchases, and, with these he soon proved that he was not to be challenged as a mere "beardless youth." His bold courage, his talents as a ruling chief, and his rapid advance in civilized habits, quickly gained him a reputation; and he was soon known to Europeans who touched at

the coast, as the prince whose friendship and alliance it was most important to secure.

It is delightful to note the timeliness of Providence. There is no haste to cause one event to meet another. Out of what seems to us a scene of confusion, comes a series of events, joining hands and marching steadily onward to results which are certain to promote the final establishment of Christ's kingdom. Thus, while Radama is preparing to reach forth his hand out of dark Madagascar to clasp that of a Christian nation, there is a side event occurring in the last war between England and France, unnoticed by men but not by God, and destined to meet the needs of Radama and his people.

About as far to the east of Madagascar as Africa is to the west, lies the island of Mauritius, or Isle of France, which, during that war, passed from the possession of the French into that of the English. By the good providence of God, a governor was placed there who was a man of Christian integrity and enlightened benevolence. This was Sir Robert Farquhar. Soon after his arrival in Mauritius, he witnessed the miseries of the slave-trade, and resolved to use his power to suppress it. With this in view, he sent, in 1816, Captain Le Sage with a company of soldiers and artisans to

visit the Chief of the Hovas, and form a treaty of friendship. Le Sage and his men were nearly driven to despair by the hardships of his journey, bnt were comforted and encouraged, in the latter part of their progress, by messengers bearing presents of provisions and letters of welcome from Radama. He received them at the capital with all the honors he was able to bestow, treated them with the most cordial politeness and generosity, and gladly sealed the promise of friendship with the governor of Mauritius, by taking the "oath of blood" with Le Sage. This was done by drinking each other's blood, — a solemn and inviolable pledge on the part of Radama.

Such of the soldiers as had survived the terrible sufferings of the journey were left to drill the army of the Hovas into some kind of discipline; it being at this time but a confused assemblage of forty thousand men, whose chief effectiveness lay in fear of, and devotion to, their king and commander, Radama. In return, Radama sent two of his younger brothers to Mauritius for education. This opened the way to Madagascar.

A man of firm Christian principle, possessing ability to negotiate a difficult mission, and able to endure hardness as a good soldier, was now needed to propose and complete the abolition of the

slave-trade. God had been preparing just such a man, and had already guided him to Mauritius. Mr. Hastie was born in Cork, of Quaker parents. He entered the army at an early age and served for years in India. This, with a superior character, in which faithfulness and energy were prominent, fitted him for the work awaiting him. Led providentially to Mauritius, and brought by a courageous action to the notice of Governor Farquhar, he was employed to teach the two brothers of Radama. Finding all the necessary qualities in him, and finding him also so "faithful in little," the governor placed in his hands the "much," which has proved his monument in history. He was made the bearer of a treaty to Radama with full power to negotiate it.

Accompanied by the two princes, Mr. Hastie reached Tananarivo amidst enthusiastic rejoicings. He found Radama dressed in a British military suit, waiting to receive him with all the cordiality and politeness of a French host. Among the presents he had brought was a fine horse, which was a marvel to all Madagascar, and at first, an object of fear. Even Radama placed a charm in his mouth before mounting, but once familiar with the novelty, he took the greatest pleasure in riding. A clock and pocket-compass were also

among the gifts. The striking of the clock was a curious fact to him; he sat before it a whole hour to witness its fidelity, and, when it struck, forgot his royal dignity, and fairly danced with delight. He appreciated the value of the compass, and amused himself with a map of the world upon which he enjoyed tracing out his own kingdom.

In entering upon the business which had brought him to Radama, Mr. Hastie found that he had not to deal with a savage chief, but with a man a century in advance of his people; having excellent common sense, great shrewdness, and an abounding desire for glory in the advancement of his country. He did not wish to govern barbarians. It was an easy thing, therefore, to convince him of the desirableness of abolishing the slave-trade. But his ministers, to whom every word of the conversations was interpreted, could not appreciate either the benefits or the need of thus cutting off the only source of wealth in the country. They violently opposed the measure. Happily, Radama possessed courage and decision of character, and took the step on his own responsibility, on condition that the English should supply him with fire-arms, which he had hitherto obtained from the slave-dealers. An estimate was also taken of the yearly loss by the cessation of

sales, which was to be made good by an annual payment from the English. Radama took pains to impress Mr. Hastie with the fact that his promise was not binding till the stipulated conditions were fulfilled. This jealousy of his own honor, and his quickness to detect the slightest falsehood, were among his most striking traits.

While negotiating the treaty, Mr. Hastie assured the king that no English subjects could hold slaves in Mauritius.

"Where, then, are the ten slaves I gave to Captain Le Sage?" asked Radama.

"Four of them," said Mr. Hastie, "are returned to this country, as you have seen, and the remainder never reached Mauritius."

Radama, however, questioned the returned slaves, and found that the others had been sold in Mauritius by Le Sage's interpreter, a fact which was entirely unknown to Mr. Hastie. Radama immediately charged him with having told a lie, and would accept of no explanation nor have anything to do with him for a whole week. Even then he would only say that he was not angry, and, afterward, in the course of a warm argument, met his statements with the reminder that he had once told a lie. It was only after repeated proof

of Mr. Hastie's strict integrity that his confidence was restored.

The treaty was completed in October, 1817, and Radama issued a proclamation enforcing its strict observance on pain of death. It was violated in several instances, but, in each case, the penalty was inflicted, even though upon some members of the royal family. The slave-traders at Tamatave, finding Radama immovable in his fidelity, broke up their establishments, sold off their possessions, and prepared to leave Madagascar.

Mr. Hastie had remained at the capital, and, at the expiration of the time appointed for the fulfillment of the treaty, went down to Tamatave to receive the stipulated goods, which consisted of fire-arms, over two thousand articles for soldiers' wear, and two thousand dollars in gold and silver, besides other items.

Instead of receiving the goods, Mr. Hastie was waited upon at Tamatave by a deputation of slave-dealers, just arrived from Mauritius, bearing a letter from Governor Hall, who occupied the position of Sir Robert Farquhar during the absence of the latter in England. This letter recalled Mr. Hastie from Madagascar, refused to fulfill the treaty, and relinquished all intercourse with Radama. Mr. Hastie was unable to believe

it, and hastened to Mauritius only to find full confirmation of these orders. Six youths who had been sent to Mauritius to be educated were returned. Radama refused to believe the slave-traders, and continued to adhere to the conditions of the treaty until convinced by this last act. His indignation against the English was intense. His generous trust in the promise of an enlightened people had been deeply outraged. He felt remorse at the sacrifice of his own relatives, and humiliated, in the extreme, at being obliged to acknowledge to the people that he had done wrong in persisting in his own judgment against theirs, in forming such a treaty. His pride was touched, too, in the return of the Malagasy boys. He afterwards asked of Mr. Hastie, "Why would not your government at Mauritius permit those boys to be instructed, whom I sent for that purpose? Although your government violated the treaty and discontinued intercourse with me, I would gladly have paid for the education of the boys." So eager was he to raise his people to an equality with other nations!

Thus, by the act of one man, Madagascar was given up to evil influences for two years and a half longer. The slave-traders hastened back to Tamatave. The town grew with rapidity.

The slave-market never was so prosperous. The French also engaged in the trade more extensively than before, and incited the natives to promote it, by providing them with all the articles of luxury they required. They furnished the house of Radama in superior style, and assisted him to copy the manners of other courts. Tables and chairs were provided, and servants taught to stand behind each guest at table. A portrait of the French king was presented, and fire-arms abundantly supplied. The people paid an increased tax to Radama on the sale of slaves, thus enabling him to improve the capital. A good carriage-road leading out of the city was his first improvement.

The traders took excellent care to gratify Radama's desire for civilization, and equal care to keep out of his way any persons who would be likely to appeal to his higher nature, or otherwise attempt to interfere with their traffic. Missionaries had been sent from England in the year of the treaty, but, upon reaching Mauritius, found that intercourse with the island had ceased, and were prevented from going further except as private individuals. This they attempted. Although received with the utmost politeness by the French authorities, they were told of the extreme

wickedness and stupidity of the natives, the forbidding character of the king, and the horrors to be endured, and finally were nearly bowed out of the island. Happily they had courage to remain, but, not daring to go to the capital, commenced their work in a small village. The inhabitants shouted *Tsara be! tsara be!* "Very good! very good!" at their arrival, and when a school was opened more children came than they were able to receive in this early experiment. These children were docile and bright. During a short absence of the teachers, and a temporary suspension of the school, they taught others, and were eager for the school to be reopened.

News of their work reached the king in spite of the slave-dealers, and he sent the missionaries an invitation to visit him. The message was never delivered. He was told that they were dead! Shortly after, and within a few weeks of each other, one of the two missionaries and the wives and children of both died, evidently from the effects of poison. The remaining missionary, Mr. Jones, received from the traders such inhuman treatment during his sickness that there is little doubt as to the instigators of the deadly work.

"Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in

his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass," was an injunction which Mr. Hastie had reason to remember, while awaiting a change of rulers in Mauritius. The wicked had it all their own way in Madagascar for two years and a half, perhaps preparing the people more effectually, by contrast, to recognize and welcome the future messengers of God. At last, Governor Farquhar returned to his post. He had obtained the sanction of the king of England to the renewal of the treaty, and immediately sent Mr. Hastie and Mr. Jones, the missionary who had survived, to open communication with Radama, and renew the broken treaty.

The traders at Tamatave attempted to prevent their journey to the capital, assuring them that the king had no intention of ever receiving them, and would behead them if they went. But Mr. Hastie knew Radama, and he knew the traders. He first sent a letter, then followed it, and was soon relieved of all doubts by a cordial answer from Radama.

They were received at Tananarivo, by soldiers two lines deep, extending from the lower part of the hill to the palace, whither they were conducted by two field officers. Here they were met by Radama, who clasped Mr. Hastie in his arms and

laughed for joy, repeating his name and taking hold of him again and again to make sure of his presence. They were conducted to an apartment so elegant and superior to that occupied by the king, three years before, that Mr. Hastie could not but express his surprise. The next evening they were invited to an excellent dinner, which was served on the plate they had brought as a present to Radama, and on home-made ware. They were also seated at table, and each guest was attended by a servant. This was certainly progress in Madagascar, where even the nobles formerly sat on mats, with their one dish of rice on the floor, and their guests supplied with leaves for plates.

CHAPTER IV.

DAWN OF CIVILIZATION.

The Renewal of the Treaty urged — Distrust of the English — Opposition by the Chiefs and People — Radama's Consent — The Conditions — Mr. Hastie carries the Treaty to Mauritius — Ratification by the British Government — Radama's Joy — Missionary Labors begun at the Capital — The First School — The new School-house — Arrival of Artisans and additional Missionaries — Improvements — Cutting of the King's Hair — Schools in the Districts — Influence of Mr. Hastie — Subjugation of the whole Island to Radama.

RADAMA took an early opportunity to express to Mr. Hastie his views of the conduct of the English in regard to the treaty. "False as the English," was already a proverb among the people. He could not understand how so solemn a pledge between himself and one of England's representatives could be broken without dishonor to their sovereign, nor why such a breach of faith should go unpunished. He thought English laws were bad if they allowed it, and the king weak to permit it. Mr. Hastie's explanation, that his sovereign had not yet sanctioned the treaty, did not satisfy Radama's idea of justice.

"I signed that treaty," said he, "contrary to the

advice of my nobles and counselors, even those who instructed me from childhood; I then waited with confidence, in the expectation of the arrival of the equivalent proposed, and engaged to be paid to me by that treaty; I fulfilled my part with the most scrupulous exactness, and, with heart-felt regret, was obliged to abandon it."

Mr. Hastie assured him that it could not occur again, as now the king had sanctioned the measure. He pressed upon him the humanity and wisdom of the step, and the benefits which would result to his country by the renewal of the treaty. But Radama was unmoved. His people and his counselors were wholly and strongly against an alliance on the former terms. An aged chieftain expressed the feeling of the entire people, when he said, —

"Where do we get all we have, but from those to whom we sell slaves? We do not make powder or arms; we are not possessed of mines; we have only very bad mechanics, and little cloth, and are by constitution an indolent people. By the sale of slaves, all our wants are supplied through the persons to whom we sell them. What do we derive from the English? Nothing! They keep up no intercourse with us. They promised and have not performed!"

Public meetings were held, without any advance toward the object desired. The people remained obstinate.

"It is with you alone that England seeks alliance; it is you alone who continue the inhuman traffic. It is for you to become the deliverer of your people and the founder of their freedom."

It was in language like this that Mr. Hastie addressed Radama before he presented himself to the assembly awaiting him in front of his palace. Thus appealed to, and clearly seeing the advantages of an alliance with a powerful nation, and actuated by the desire of attaining a glorious name, yet restrained by the angry opposition of his ministers and people, what could he do? Repeating his reproaches for the past, he exclaimed, placing his hand on his heart, —

"Put your hand here, and say what am I to do?"

Mr. Hastie entreated him to regard the future rather than the past; to care for the welfare of his people, and to remember that he had to choose between a few vile slave-dealers and a powerful monarch in this alliance. With much similar persuasion Radama was nearly won over to the cause; but still his people were against him. After hearing all that Mr. Hastie could say to the

assembly in favor of the treaty, the most influential of the ministers arose, in reply. He carefully repeated its whole history, till he came to the violation of it. Here, with an eloquence worthy of a finished orator, he paused as if he had no words to express the wrong. For a moment, intense silence reigned, and then a confusion of voices arose such as might have intimidated any king.

"You see," said Radama to Mr. Hastie, "I am well inclined, but my people are not. I recollect hearing of the conduct of the French nation to a late king!"

But when silence was restored, Mr. Hastie skillfully added a new inducement to all that he had hitherto offered. He told them that Governor Farquhar would receive persons for instruction, and that the London Missionary Society would send artisans as well as missionaries, to instruct the people of Madagascar in the various trades. This was twice repeated and twice received in silence. The assembly broke up to meet again the next day in front of the palace. The king remained all night with his counselors, and was weak and fatigued when he appeared before the vast multitude representing every district under his control. He was ready to comply with the terms on one condition — that England should

instruct his people; — adding that nothing but instruction could alleviate their present misery.

Think of this from the king of a half-civilized nation! He did not ask money nor lands as an equivalent for the sacrifice of the only source of wealth his people yet possessed. As Solomon asked wisdom from God, so this king asked wisdom at the hands of a great nation.

He stipulated that twenty persons should be sent to England and Mauritius for instruction, and that artificers should come to reside in Madagascar. Mr. Hastie had no authority to send any to England, but, after some deliberation, replied that he would take six. Radama was too shrewd to allow any new arrangements to be made without "sanction," and demanded how he happened to consent. Happily, Mr. Hastie was an honest man and a Christian. He frankly told the king that he intended to make a personal sacrifice, and himself pay the expenses incurred, if his government should not indorse his promise. This was explained to the assembled people, but still received with disapprobation and murmurings. The king retired with his counselors, and again conferred with them till daybreak. The fate of thousands, both for time and eternity, hung upon the decision. Mr. Jones, the missionary, had been present

at nearly every interview, and had sustained Mr. Hastie in his generous and untiring efforts to lift up this nation from their darkness. Truly, it was an idolatrous nation, but the two embassadors could plead with God that night as Moses often did for the Israelites.

In the morning Radama sent his final answer. He promised that the treaty should be immediately ratified, and the slave traffic ended at once, if Mr. Hastie would promise the education of twenty of his subjects, as he had proposed the previous day. "I agreed," writes Mr. Hastie; "and I trust that Divine Power, which guides all hearts, will induce the government to sanction the act."

The same day Radama ordered the immediate return of all slaves sent down to the coast, and not then sold, of whom there were large numbers. He also forbade any one to pay debts to the traders, in slaves, — directing money to be substituted in such cases, on pain of death.

When the king went in state to ratify the treaty, he concluded the business by presenting to Mr. Hastie a receipt for the money and horses due him for the twelve months in which he had strictly observed the treaty, saying that it would "help to defray the expenses of instructing the persons" who were to be sent to England. It is not to be

forgotten, either, that Radama took pains to claim the smallest possible indemnity, when the treaty was first drawn up. He was also exceedingly anxious to have it understood that some provinces in Madagascar, over which he then had no control, would still continue to export slaves. He feared he should be blamed for the acts of others.

"I would not, for all I could possibly gain," said he to Mr. Hastie, "that the English at any future period should charge me with deception."

When every thing was completed, Mr. Hastie returned to Mauritius to secure the ratification of the treaty by the British government. On his journey down to Tamatave, he met people going up to the king to carry tribute, in gratitude for his proclamation that they should no more be sold away from their country. They insisted upon turning about and carrying Mr. Hastie as far as he would permit, in token of their gratitude to him, also. Many burden-bearers were on their way to the capital; and three slave-dealers, with two hundred packages of goods, had already arrived there, but were obliged to sell at half-price, and leave without obtaining a single slave. Truly the triumphing of the wicked is short.

During Mr. Hastie's absence, Radama was constantly assured by the "sikidy" that the English

would again deceive him. A French officer and his suite also arrived with the same assurances, and, in addition, endeavored to convince Radama that there is no God. Encouraged by the arguments of Mr. Jones, who had remained at the capital, the king and his ministers adhered to the right, — Radama exclaiming, loudly, "There must be a God!" When, at length, letters arrived from the governor and from Rataffe, a Hovah prince, who had accompanied Mr. Hastie, informing him that the treaty was confirmed, he shed tears of joy. Upon the return of the latter with the stipulated articles, he denounced the falsehood of the divinations. This was the first shaking of his faith in the sikidy.

By request of the king, the missionaries now commenced their labors at the capital. The first school was opened in December, 1820. It consisted of the children of the royal family and of the nobles. In April they had made sufficient progress to read in the Bible, and did themselves credit in other branches. A second school was opened, in October, for the children of the people, under the care of Rev. David Griffiths, sent by the London Missionary Society. The children were eager to adopt the European dress, and brought cloth to the wives of the missionaries to

be made into jackets and dresses. The house in which they were taught was soon too small for the rapidly increasing numbers. It was the property of the king's mother, and was a storehouse for rice, mats, cooking utensils, and dishes. It was infested with rats and mice; and the roof, being immensely high and steep, was swayed to and fro by the wind. Notwithstanding all these discomforts, the little Malagasy children sewed, sung, and spelled, with a diligence that would do credit to the youth of far more favored lands. To obtain a new school-house was a serious matter; but Mr. Griffiths made known his embarrassment to the king, and received the following reply: —

"Saith Radama,

"Live long, my friend; be not troubled. I will build you such a house as you wish, if my people can build it; but if you wish to have a house built on the same plan or similar to those at Mauritius, who can build it? If you can find a man to build it, I will furnish the wood.

"Saith your good friend,

"RADAMA MANJAKA."

Accordingly, orders were given to drag trees from the forest. The people of a whole district were thus employed, and five journeys of forty

miles to the forest were made before a sufficient quantity was obtained. A piece of ground was chosen and given for the house; the carpenters went to work with hatchets and wedges, chopping and splitting, till the trees assumed the desired dimensions. To build a house without saw, nails, or hammer would seem an impossibility, and yet this, like all the other houses, went up without those conveniences. The framework was joined together by mortise and tenon, notches and pins, and bound in place with fibrous roots or tough plants. The windows and doors were made to slide in grooves at the top and bottom. When finished, its size astonished the people, it being the largest house yet erected in the capital, though probably not the highest, for no one was allowed to build a house higher than that of the king.

At this time, the missionaries found obstacles to the growth of their schools in the fears of those parents who resided near the capital. The boys who had been sent with Prince Rataffe to England for education not returning with him, caused a report that they had been sold to the cannibals. Mothers, suspecting the missionaries to be in league with the slave-traders, became alarmed for the safety of their children, and concealed them in rice-holes under ground, causing death in several

instances. Radama was absent upon an expedition against the Sakalavas, but his mother immediately issued commands calculated to restore confidence. "Cease from all such practices," said she, "for it is the instruction of your children here, and not sending them to another country, that is the wish and intention of Radama your king."

A number of artisans and mechanics, as well as additional missionaries and their families, were sent by the London Society in 1821 and 1822. Radama welcomed them all gladly, giving them houses and lands, and natives to assist them; requiring, however, that apprentices should be taught the various trades. The slave-traders had only brought the luxuries of civilization, and that from interested motives. The Bible messengers introduced the useful arts, and taught the ignorant natives how to rise out of their degradation. The resources of the country were explored, and brought to the notice of the king. The people were taught to make bricks and mortar, to use the saw, to make hinges, screws, and locks. Grains, such as wheat and oats, were introduced, and the plough and harrow brought to help the improvement in agriculture. The manufacture of leather was also taught. Hitherto the people had neither

shoes nor stockings, the nobles only wearing sandals. Caps and hats began to be worn; and the king went so far as to imitate the European mode of wearing the hair. It had required two or three days to dress his own in layers of plaits and curls, according to the Hovah fashion. He tried it upon his brother first, and then had his own parted and cut, to the great indignation of many of his conservative people, who still religiously clung to the ancient ways. A few Hovah women found fault with this forsaking of the customs of their ancestors. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" They raved about it until at last four or five thousand gathered near the capital, and sent complaint to Radama of the undue influence of the Europeans. In return, he told them he should cut his hair as he pleased without consulting women, ordered the five ringleaders to be put to death, and kept the remainder in their place of meeting, under a guard of soldiers, three days without food or shelter.

This summary mode of proceeding was characteristic of Radama. His will was law, and he would never tolerate the slightest opposition to it. He had determined that he would not rule barbarians, but that civilized they should be. A boy who had refused to go to England to be educated was

punished with fifty stripes, and tied to a flag-pole, that all the people might see and fear. To those who still withheld their children from the schools he said, "If you wish to become wise and happy and please me, send your children to the schools, and let them be taught; for the good, the industrious, and the wise shall be honored by me." They knew very well the alternative, and submitted quietly.

Others in the districts rejoiced at the opening of schools. On the occasion of a journey, one old man welcomed the missionaries by running after them when they had passed his dwelling, and entreating them, like a patriarch of old, to turn back and eat bread with him. He was so delighted at their consent that he even broke up his bedstead to provide fuel for the cooking, remarking that he loved to honor those whom Radama honored.

The schools at the capital for children were not the only ones. Radama opened one in the court-yard of his palace, which consisted of the officers of the army and their wives. These were placed under the tuition of a Frenchman. Radama himself was a pupil to Mr. Hastie. The missionaries had reduced to writing the Malagasy language, which he was learning. He was also acquiring the English language; but, during a short absence

of Mr. Hastie, went for assistance to the French master, who pronounced the letters so differently that the vexed king immediately made a law that "throughout his kingdom, each letter should have but one sound!" Mr. Hastie was also actively engaged in opening schools in all the districts under the king's control, and encouraged the people to engage in agriculture, or to be instructed by the artisans who were placed in the villages. For the most part, these efforts were met with enthusiasm.

Mr. Hastie stood as a mentor at the side of Radama. His quick eye perceived every thing; but he never detected a defect without proposing a remedy, nor proposed a remedy without throwing all his energy into its accomplishment. At his suggestion, the capital was transformed from a place of filth to a pattern of neatness for the rest of the kingdom. The roads were improved, laws were made more liberal, and, above all, humanity was encouraged. Radama went upon warlike expeditions against neighboring provinces, and, in these, was taught how to spare and to benefit his enemies, to subjugate them by true superiority, and to offer in return for their allegiance the same gifts of civilization that he himself had received. In all this he submitted to the wisdom of his adviser; but there were times

when he felt that he understood the safety of measures better than Mr. Hastie, and then he was immovable. On one occasion, when Mr. Hastie was urging him strongly to do what was against his judgment, he checked him by saying he "should have a very poor opinion of him if he pressed him on the subject."

During one of Radama's expeditions to stop the export of slaves in one of the coast provinces inhabited by Moors, he offered a reward for the head of the chief, and threatened to lay the province waste if they did not immediately give him their allegiance. Mr. Hastie urged him to offer rather the promise of security in case of submission, and undertook the difficult mission of seeking the rude chief in his rocky retreat. When he found him, he procured his consent to the terms of peace by the same course of honesty and truth which had won Radama. In order that his uncouth manner might not offend the king, Mr. Hastie taught him how to bow his head when presented; but the savage awkwardly persisted in bending his head backward. Radama had once caused the whole front of the house of judges to be taken down, and obliged the judges to hold court in the open air, because they had failed, in passing, to salute him on pretense of not seeing him. It was

safer for the chieftain's head, therefore, to learn to bend to his conqueror. In return for his submission he was allowed to choose his own lands, and the whole army was kept in waiting till a house was built upon it. The proud chief had chosen a rocky hight that overlooked extensive rice-grounds, saying he wished his feet to be above the heads of his people.

Radama also secured the submission of the Sakalavas, the most powerful of the people of Madagascar; and his well-furnished and well-disciplined army was not to be opposed by any. In four years after the completion of the treaty with England he was able to announce to his people that he was King of Madagascar.

"The whole island," said he, "is now mine. It is governed by one king, ruled by the same laws, and must perform the same service. There are no more wars. Guns and spears may sleep. I am the father of the orphan; the protector of the widow and the oppressed; the avenger of evils and wrongs; and the rewarder of the good and just. With regard to yourselves, you must now work. Cultivate the waste lands. Rushes grow from the earth, and gold and silver will not be poured down upon you from the skies."

CHAPTER V.

PROGRESS AND REFORMS.

Success of the Missionary Work — The Idols discredited — The Vazimba dishonored — Complaints against the innovations — Attendance of the King at the Schools — His ridicule of the Idols — Still, however, rejects the Gospel — Laws agalnst Intemperance and Infanticide — Restriction of the Ordeal by Poison — Death of Mr. Hastie — Radama's Grief — Building of New Palaces — Radama's Dissipation — His sickness and Death — Proclamation of Queen Ranavalona — The National Mourning — The Funeral and Tomb of Radama — His Character.

While Radama was thus engaged in bringing the whole island under his own control, the missionaries were quietly but steadily making progress in their work. The number of schools and scholars rapidly increased. A building was erected for a library, and funds appropriated to furnish reading for the many who were already able to read. A series of lectures on the being and perfections of God was addressed to the youth and native teachers, and they were encouraged to take notes of the lectures, or to repeat afterward the leading ideas. The Bible was in process of translation into the Malagasy language, and the missionaries themselves superintended the printing of such portions as were finished, besides hymn-

books, spelling-books, reading-books, and catechisms; in all over five thousand. A church consisting of the missionaries and artisans was organized as early as 1822. It included persons of several denominations; so that without disturbing the minds of the natives concerning the various creeds, it simply placed before them Christ crucified. The Lord's Supper was administered first on this occasion in the court-yard of the palace, — the house and chapel which Mr. Griffiths had asked of the king not being yet completed. When at last it was finished, over a thousand persons attended the Sabbath services, crowding even the doors and windows. It was true of them as of the land of Zebulon, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up."

The children did not fail to see very soon that the idols were as dust and ashes before the great Being whom they were taught to seek. The Malagasy were willing enough that their children should be educated; but this questioning of the power of their idols was a serious offense to them, and an insult to their ancestors.

"Unless you abide by our wishes and our customs, we shall complain of you to the king," the parents threatened.

"We can not prevent your complaining to the king," returned the children; "but we have been taught to tell the truth, and though to please you we should say with our lips that we believe in the idols, yet in our hearts we can not."

Accordingly, when the people repaired to the capital to pay their taxes they took the opportunity to present their complaints.

"Our children," said they, "are forsaking the customs of our ancestors, and rejecting our gods."

"Do you mind your work," was the determined answer of the king, "and let the children mind their instructions." They were obliged to go home and submit to the new order of things.

Schools were opened even in the sacred villages, where strangers had hitherto never been allowed to dwell. In one of these the son of the idol-keeper became convinced that an object which had to be taken care of was not God. He read the words "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord;" and knowing this to be contrary to his father's instructions, he went to him and asked to be released from the school.

"Why should I continue to learn what you do not believe?" he urged.

"What do I not believe?" asked his father.

"That of which I have told you before," answered the boy, "and which will not only do me good, but you also. There are new heavens and a new earth for those who believe in God, with everlasting life, and garments shining like the sun, that never wax old."

This was new truth, for the Malagasy either believe the soul to be a breath of wind, a mist, or a ghost wandering after death over the earth, or pass the subject by as a mystery too deep to be understood. The idol-keeper was so impressed by his son's words, that he abandoned his occupation of taking care of a god that could not take care of him.

The graves of the *Vazimba*, a name given to the ancient dead, were objects of dread and veneration to the Malagasy. Their spirits were supposed to be able to inflict evil or bestow good, and their anger to be excited if a stone or the twig of a tree upon their places of rest should be removed. To assure the scholars that none but the true God possessed power to reward or punish, the missionaries went with them to one of these graves, cut off the branch of a tree, took a stone from the tomb, and persuaded two of the scholars to carry them to the village.

"Do not touch them," some exclaimed; "the

Vazimba will certainly be enraged, and you will become ill and die."

"The Vazimba will come in the night, and carry you away to the region of ghosts!" said others.

But the two boys were firm; and it was not without some anxiety that the missionaries watched them for days, lest fear alone should produce illness. Had this occurred, the anger of the inhabitants would have been excited, and their superstitions confirmed. But the Lord preserved them, and the lesson was salutary.

"What do your parents say to this?" asked the teachers.

"They say that you white people have some charms which the Vazimba are not able to resist."

Older persons could not be induced to touch the graves of the Vazimba, and were deeply offended at this shaking of the faith of the children in these, and in their idols. When the king returned from one of his expeditions, complaints of this kind were so generally made that he sent for Mr. Jones, to caution the missionaries.

"They are too active," said he. "If they continue to instruct the people with the same speed, they will turn the world upside down." At another time he said, "I am anxious that my people should improve in knowledge. Let me not go too

slowly lest I miss my aim; nor too fast lest I stumble: for while a man is endeavoring to run with all the speed he can, if another should give him a push, the chance is that he will fall."

The schools were encouraged, however, by the attendance of the king at the examinations, and also by frequent visits, both to listen and commend. His personal example tended to break the superstitions of the people. He would not allow them to wait for "lucky days," when the missionaries were to be served. On the occasion of his return from a visit to the coast, the diviners at the capital fixed upon a certain day for his entrance according to the revelations of the sikidy. Formerly, he had awaited in the valley the coming of the right day, but now he marched into the city in defiance of the mortified diviners, and his frightened ministers, assuring them that Radama would enter his capital whenever he pleased.

He began also to show the same contempt for the idols. These were always covered with a piece of scarlet cloth; and this covering of one of the principal idols having become old, the people of the village, where it was kept, asked the gift of a new one from Radama.

"Why, surely," answered the king, "he must

be very poor, if he can not get a piece of cloth for himself. If he be a god, he can provide his own garments."

At another time, when the king was surrounded by many of his officers, an idol-keeper rushed into his presence, bearing a pole upon the end of which was an idol beneath a piece of red velvet. The man ran about wildly, saying the idol caused him to do thus.

"Let me try if it will be the same with me," said Radama, taking it and walking about with quiet dignity. "Perhaps I am too heavy for the god to move," he added, sarcastically; "do you try, you are light enough," and he gave it to one of his ministers. He also bore it about with gravity, and gave it back to the abashed keeper. A deep impression was made upon the whole company.

Their superstitions were again subjected to Radama's ridicule, in the exposure of a divinity said to dwell in a cave in the mountains, and to be able to give audible responses. He visited the cave and, entering it, saluted the invisible god. A solemn response came from the dark recesses.

As a gift of money is always offered to the king by visitors, so Radama offered homage to the

unseen. A hand was gently reached forth to accept the gift. Radama seized it.

"This is no god, — this is a human being!" he exclaimed, and the mysterious divinity was dragged forth to the light of day, and to the ridicule of the assembled people. Other impostures and delusions were exposed, and the deceivers severely punished; so that the people could not but feel the influence of the king as well as that of their children. Still Radama did not place his trust in Jehovah. He loved and respected the messengers of God because they met the demands of his moral nature, and still more because they contributed to his own glory in elevating his people. Further than this, the truth of the gospel seemed hidden from him, — the wise and prudent king, — while it was revealed to babes. The poor, the humble, the little children, were already looking at the shining face of Jesus. For himself, Radama was yet sufficient.

When Mr. Jones first came to the capital he found the king one day firing a cannon during a thunder-storm, and inquired the cause. Radama replied that God was talking, and he was answering. Mr. Jones explained the audacious irreverence, and was listened to with respect. The gift of a Bible was also accepted gratefully by the king,

with the remark that if it contained what was "straight, and not crooked," he should be glad to have it. He could admire its sublime wisdom; but he was not able to sit as a child at the foot of the cross. Yet this bold and prudent king, so eager for glory, so strong in himself, and so tenacious of homage, was in the hands of the Almighty as clay in the hands of the potter. His will was molded into subjection to the great purpose of the salvation of that people, and though Radama might have seemed to himself the promoter only of his own interests, he was in reality an ax in the hand of God laid at the root of every tree that bore evil fruit.

Idolatry had already received its death-blow. Temperance was enforced by a law against the sale of liquor, though the law-maker himself indulged freely, and permitted its use in the palace. Infanticide was prohibited. It had been the custom of the Malagasy to destroy all children who were born on days pronounced unlucky by the astrologers; but Radama declared that "all the infants doomed to death by the astrologers became his, and that whoever destroyed them destroyed his children, and should suffer death for their murder." Radama restricted the use, and had the intention of abolishing wholly the "tangena," or

trial by poison, which was supposed to inflict death on the guilty, and spare the innocent. Many had been yearly subjected to this terrible ordeal, and many perished.

Through all these reformations, Mr. Hastie stood by the king, counseling and urging him to take each step firmly. Mr. Hastie's death, in 1826, was an irreparable loss to Madagascar, and was felt most deeply by Radama. "I have lost many of my people, many of my soldiers, most of my officers, and several of the highest nobles; but this is nothing in comparison with the loss of Adrian-asy (nobleman Hastie). He has been a faithful friend, — a husband to Madagascar. The good he has done can not be too highly spoken of by me." Thus, too, all the people mourned and honored him.

While engaged in exalting his people, Radama did not forget to increase his own royal dignity by the building of palaces for himself. His city residence was within the palisades which inclose all the buildings called the palace. It is still distinguished by the name of the "silver house," so called because the gable-ends, ceilings, windows, and door-posts are ornamented with silver studs and nails, though one traveler says these ornaments are tiny silver bells. This house is quite insignificant

beside the larger palace, standing next and towering above it. Its chief peculiarities are its roof and the columns by which the two galleries surrounding it are supported. Each column consists of the trunk of a tree rising to the hight of eighty feet; the central one which supports the roof being one hundred and twenty feet high, according to Madame Pfeiffer. She further states that "in bringing home the chief pillar alone five thousand persons were employed, and twelve days were occupied in its erection." The steep roof gives a singular aspect to the building. It is forty feet in hight, has three tiers of windows, and is surmounted by a golden bird with outstretched wings. This palace is only used for public purposes, and on state occasions, and is connected by galleries with the adjoining residences.

In 1824, Radama began to build a palace in the vicinity of Tananarivo, under the direction of a French architect of ability. Monsieur Le Gros was obliged to conform somewhat to Malagasy notions of architecture which forced the building out of the fine proportions it might otherwise have assumed. Like the palace in town, it is surrounded with a wide balcony, supported by arches resting on columns. The chief room is one hundred feet in length and the floor paved in mosaic,

composed of blocks of wood of every shade from ebony to maple, and beautifully polished. An incredible amount of labor was required to convey the timber from the distant forest over almost impassable roads; and, when upon the ground, sixty carpenters were employed four years in completing the structure. But Radama's favorite resort was a small cottage, a short distance from the city, built for his especial use. Its approach was through an avenue of bananas and grape-vines. A small sheet of water, stocked with fish, turtles, and water-fowl, ornamented the grounds; and a garden containing many foreign plants and a collection of nearly every species of native growth, was its chief attraction to Radama. He amused himself with superintending it. It is said also that he formed two letters "R. R." (Radama Rex), with green turf, on each side of the path to the cottage. In the heat of summer, this was his resting-place from the cares of royalty, or from the fatigues and dangers of hunting the wild boar in the great belt of forest beyond the plain.

Life must have seemed desirable to this ambitious king, especially when looking back over the last ten years, and noting the strides by which he had advanced from the position of an uneducated "beardless youth" and chief of a single province,

to that of an enlightened monarch of "the Great Britian of Africa." Doubtless, he counted at least upon ten more years in which to win renown; but already the handwriting of Death was upon the walls of his palaces. He did not see it, but his friends did. Dissipation had latterly wrought serious inroads upon a constitution weakened by exposure to the sickness of the coast districts, during his expeditions there. Little by little he withdrew from public duties, and abstained from fatigues which he was no longer able to bear. Medical aid was not obtained early enough to be of service, and, after months of gradual decline, he was laid upon his death-bed. Mr. Jones saw him two days before his death, but could scarcely recognize his countenance or understand the few sentences he attempted to utter. He died on the afternoon of July 27th, 1828. A just and wise king was added to those who brighten the pages of history. We should be glad to believe that his earthly crown gave place to a heavenly one; but we have read with fear* that at one time he stated explicitly that he did not believe in the God of the Europeans.

*Radama, king of Madagascar, was a few years ago offered the knighthood of the order of St. Patrick, which he declined, assigning as his reason, that he could not take the oath which required him to say that he believed in God, or that he feared God, meaning the God of the Europeans. — *Ellis's Madagascar.*

Neither the missionaries nor the people knew of the death of Radama till seven days after the event. It had been studiously kept secret to give time for political plottings; and the better to disguise it, a band continued to play as usual every afternoon in front of the palace. Radama's nephew, the son of Prince Rataffe, was always regarded as the successor to the crown, but either had not been formally designated by the king before his death or the fact was concealed. A "kabary," or great assemblage of the people, was called to hear the king's choice named, as though he were still living. On the first of August, it was announced that Queen Ranavalona, the senior of Radama's twelve wives (though he had but one wife — Rasalimo — who was recognized as queen;) was appointed to the throne. On the 3d it was officially proclaimed that the king had "retired," — "had gone to his fathers."

According to the customs of Madagascar, no one was allowed to work during the season of mourning, which sometimes continued a year. All were required to shave the head, were forbidden to sing, dance, or sit in a chair, to ride, or wear a hat, or enter into conversation. An immense crowd assembled from all the surrounding districts, and erected tents and sheds for shelter

on the plain at the foot of Tananarivo. A gentleman from India said that he could "only compare it to the multitudes collected at the festivals of Juggernaut."

The remains of the king were deposited in a silver coffin, made by the beating of fourteen thousand silver dollars into plates, which were fastened with silver rivets. This was placed in state upon a platform covered with scarlet cloth (scarlet being the royal color) and gold lace. A balustrade, covered with white cloth (the Malagasy sign of mourning) surrounded the platform; and the pillars at the four corners were draped in scarlet. Lamps and lusters were suspended by purple cords between the pillars. The outer walls of the palace were covered with white cloth, and within were draperies of crimson and purple silk, as were also over the gateways. The court-yard was carpeted with blue cloth. All the officers of the court wore white lambas over their uniforms.

Radama's tomb was, like those of former sovereigns, in the court-yard. A vast amount of property was buried with him. Golden vases and spears, Bibles, a quantity of silver plate, and other costly gifts from the kings of England and France, besides over ten thousand Spanish dollars were placed in his grave, as if to sustain his rank in

the invisible world of the Vazimbas, to which the people believed his soul had gone. A small house has since been built over the tomb in which a table, a bottle of wine, two glasses, and two chairs are placed for the use of the spirits of Radama and his father. "The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory." This house remains a sad, though unintentional monument of the two chief defects in the otherwise admirable character of Radama,—his adherence to the belief of his ancestors, and the intemperate habits of the last years of his life. Resolute in every other respect, he yielded himself to this vice. Just, humane, generous toward his subjects; ambitious as a king; firm, prompt and wise as a ruler; faithful and honorable as a friend, even though tried as by fire; a valuable and refined companion in the midst of a barbarous people; he deserves the inscription engraved upon his tomb, "Unequaled among the Princes." Would that there could be added with truth, the epitaph of some of the ancient, good kings; "His heart was perfect with the Lord his God;" but he claimed himself to be a "visible god," and truth forbids this crowning encomium, without which even the glory of kings is "as the flower of the grass."

CHAPTER VI.

QUEEN RANAVALONA — PERSECUTION BEGUN.

Suspension of Missionary Work — Murder of Prince Rataffe and his Family — Breaking the English Treaty — Expulsion of Mr. Lyall — Pupils of Schools drafted into the Army — Coronation of the Queen — Her personal appearance — General Purification by the Tangena — Fear of the French — Baptism of Native Christians Ra-poor-negro — Arrival of New Missionaries — Prosperity of the Schools — The Converted Idol-keeper — Circulation of the Scriptures — The Queen's Illness — Complaint against the Christians — Convocation of the Nation — Decrees against Christianity — Departure of the Missionaries — Revival of Pagan Rites — Rafaravavy.

THE missionaries waited with profound anxiety to know the intentions of the new sovereign toward themselves and their work. They had become too important to the government to be wholly discarded, and yet it was very soon evident that they were to be restricted and hampered in all ways, if not absolutely banished. The prohibition of labor among all classes of people during the year of mourning extended to the missionary work. The schools were closed. Nothing remained for them but to busy themselves with the completion of the translation and printing of both the Old and the New Testament, and other books and tracts for the future benefit of the scholars.

They did this, as all their work, with an energy that seemed to foresee the future. They were inspired from the beginning to do quickly what their hands found to do.

Mr. Bennet, a gentleman sent by the Missionary Society to visit Madagascar, arrived at the time of Radama's death, and finding that he could neither have any communicatian with the queen, nor ascertain the state of the schools for months to come, desired to return to England, and sent a request to the government for permission to leave the island, as was customary. The only answer he received from the queen was that "she was the sovereign of the time of his departure;" and he was obliged to wait with humble patience till she chose to let him go.

The murder of Prince Rataffe, his wife, and son, because of near relationship to Radama, and consequent right to the throne, was the first step of the new government. The breaking of the English treaty was the next. A message was sent to Mr. Lyall, successor to Mr. Hastie, that the annual equivalent for the abolition of the slave-trade would no longer be received, and that he was dismissed from the capital. The season was unfavorable for going to the coast. Mr. Lyall was obliged to wait two or three months, and then signified

his wish to proceed. "He is to go, and his family with him," was the reply. But while making preparations his house was surrounded by a multitude of people bearing an idol, whose displeasure they said was excited. Bags filled with serpents were emptied in the court-yard, and fifty strong natives, each holding a serpent by the tail, took Mr. Lyall and his son prisoners, and marched them off on foot to a village six miles distant. The serpents were flourished in the air, and held up writhing before the eyes of the people that they might see for themselves the displeasure of the god who it was pretended had by his anger and power drawn them thither. Mr. Lyall and his family reached the coast in safety, but not without great suffering. The only reasons given for the insulting expulsion were, that he allowed his horse to approach a sacred village, and sent his servants to catch butterflies and serpents, which he was collecting as a naturalist. The queen and her ministers laid all the blame upon the idol, who they said had commanded it to be done; but they secretly exulted in ridding themselves of the restraint of the presence of English officers.

Radama had allowed foreigners to reside ten years in his dominions, after which they were required either to leave the island or become subject

to the laws of Madagascar. Mr. Griffiths's ten years had expired, and he requested to know the queen's wishes in regard to his further stay. Her reply was, "Tie up your luggage, and return to your native country!" After much negotiation, however, she was induced to allow him a respite.

One can readily imagine the dislike entertained by a queen and court wholly committed to idolatry toward the men who distinctly taught the people, both in the school-rooms and in the chapels, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." In the bitter malice of their hearts, they would have escorted the whole of them out of Madagascar with a procession of serpent-bearers, and joined in the hissing, had not self-interest restrained them. It is wonderful how the Ruler of all hearts held these emissaries of Satan in check till his work was done, and sustained the faith and courage of the missionaries till they accomplished the certain planting of God's Word in that kingdom.

When it was announced, in six months after the king's death, that the schools might be again opened, the missionaries were taken by surprise at the singular favor. Before the suspension the schools had numbered one hundred, and the schol-

ars between four and five thousand. The reopening of them was forbidden in the sacred villages, and the pupils had hardly assembled in those remaining, when the motive was apparent. Seven hundred of the teachers and older youth were drafted into the army, to be sent immediately to secure the submission of the southern provinces. The queen and her advisers cared not a whit for the instruction of the people, but an efficient army was necessary to her power. Schools she knew made good officers and soldiers, and this was a convenient mode of obtaining recruits. When the youth attended school they were considered in the service of the government, and the queen claimed that she only transferred them from one branch of service to another, when she required them for the army. Radama's mode of obtaining troops had been to assemble the people *en masse*, to fire them by his own warlike address, and request them to volunteer, requiring those who remained at home to pay ten dollars each. An army of fifteen thousand was once raised for his immediate service in this way. The new mode of drafting from the schools alarmed the people, and many refused to permit their sons to attend. This occasioned a decline in the prosperity of the schools.

After ten months of the appointed mourning, an edict was issued that it should cease, and the people return to their ordinary labors. The coronation of the queen was appointed for the following month, June, 1829. The day was ushered in by the firing of cannon. The queen was received by her ministers, army officers, and a detachment of soldiers dressed in the uniform of British grenadiers, and escorted to the tomb of the kings, where she offered a prayer to the father of Radama. She was then conveyed by a difficult, circuitous route in a procession of the royal family, civil officers, troops, and singing-women to a plain without the city. Here, in the midst of a great concourse of people, she alighted upon a sacred stone; then, with her face to the east, exclaimed, in her own language, —

"Am I consecrated, consecrated, consecrated?"

"You are consecrated, consecrated, consecrated!" returned the five generals who stood by her.

"Long live Ranavalona, queen!" shouted the crowd.

She then descended from the stone and approached the two chief idols, consisting of silver rings, carnelians, and blocks of wood, fastened together and covered with scarlet velvet. Taking

the poles upon which they were carried in her hands, she addressed them: —

"My predecessors have given you to me. I put my trust in you; therefore, support me."

Alas! that in the face of a great multitude, and in the daylight of the gospel, she should deliberately choose to confide the guidance of her life to senseless bits of wood and stone. "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it." But there were already those among the throng who could cry out, both with joy and bitterness, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust." For these there was sorrow in store, and they might well watch with keen interest all the significant acts and words of the queen on this coronation-day.

When she had returned the idols to their keepers, she was borne in her palanquin to a platform, upon which was placed the royal chair or throne, covered with scarlet cloth and ornamented with gold lace. When seated here, a major of the body-guard held over her head a scarlet umbrella. The royal family sat upon her right and left.

Among them was Raketaka, the only daughter of Radama, and Rasalimo, his recognized wife.

The attire of Queen Ranavalona was of native fashion, and rich in material. Her upper dress was of purple silk, fastened with gold buttons; the lower dress of white silk, and her mantle of fine scarlet cloth. She wore stockings of white silk, and yellow morocco shoes. Her crown consisted of a mother-of-pearl shell, out of which sprang five branches resembling coral, having at the end of each a red stone and golden bell. A fine gold chain of native manufacture encircled her head and held the crown in place. Necklaces of coral and carnelian, bracelets of pearl, gold, and coral, anklets and finger-rings, completed her ornaments.

In figure she was somewhat stout. Her face was pleasant in expression, though indicating great firmness; her features small and well-proportioned, and her manner not ungracious. She seemed a harmless woman; but she was a sleeping tigress, waiting only a fit time for springing upon her victims.

While she remained seated, the band, taught at Mauritius, played the national air. Afterward she arose, and, after having saluted the various clans

represented in the assemblage, addressed them thus: —

"If you have never known me before, I am Ranavalona who now appears before you."

"Hoo, hoo!" the people shouted.

"God gave the kingdom to my ancestors, they transferred it to Andriampoinimerina (father of Radama), and he again to Radama, *on condition that I should be his successor.* Is it not so my subjects?"

"It is so," all replied, without a thought of censuring the bold untruth of the usurper.

"I will not change what Radama and my ancestors have done," she continued; "but I will add to what they did. Do not think because I am a woman that I can not govern the kingdom. Never say she is a woman, weak and ignorant; she is unable to rule over us! My greatest solicitude and study will always be to promote your welfare, and to make you happy. Do you hear that, my subjects?"

"Yes," was the general reply.

After an address from her chief minister, the different clans arose in the order of superiority, and the chief of each advanced to offer assurances of their fidelity in her service, and to present their hasina, — a gift of money, — in token of homage.

The officers of the army came last. Thus the ceremonies were ended, and the procession bore back the new-made queen, and dispersed quietly.

It was not many months after the plausible address at her coronation that Ranavalona ordered a general purification of the country by means of the tangena, or trial by poison. A number of civil and military officers at the capital were among those subjected to the ordeal; and "many hundreds, if not thousands, of the Malagasy are supposed to have been sacrificed." This, though done at the pretended command of the idols, was undoubtedly occasioned by the conversion of some of the royal family and officers of the court to Christianity. Idolatry was restored, and the acts of the government were wholly regulated by the directions of the sikidy.

The missionaries might have been banished at this juncture, and their work ended, had not one of those timely providences, which the Almighty so gloriously brings forward to check the foe, startled every heart in Madagascar. A fleet of six French ships arrived on the coast to lay claim to one of the eastern provinces where they had long had settlements. Two or three of the coast towns were attacked and pillaged. An embassy from the queen assured them that they should not

have one inch of the island, and the people were equally spirited in their determination to resist the claim. France was jealous of the English monopoly of influence. Ranavanola intended to get rid of both, and accordingly took every measure to resist the demands of the former. In the mean time she was lenient toward the missionaries, probably in order to secure the favor of England until the French were disposed of. They were permitted to erect a new chapel, to preach, teach, and print. During a whole year the French continued to harass and alarm the people, and the missionaries to labor with their might, scattering the printed Gospels and tracts, by means of the old pupils and native teachers, all over Madagascar. The members of the little churches were taught to tell the joyful tidings of Jesus wherever they went. Prayer-meetings were encouraged, and youth taught to pray in their own language, which they did with a fervor that indicated a true change of heart. The Sabbath services were well attended, and the people were inclined to converse much together concerning the Word of God. They came in numbers to the houses of the missionaries, that they might be taught the way to Christ.

For six months after the French had left the coast the government continued its military prep-

arations in expectation of a renewal of hostilities, and likewise continued to tolerate Christianity. The queen even permitted natives to be admitted to the church, and receive the ordinance of baptism. A message from her was read in the Mission Chapel that "all who wish are at liberty to be baptized, commemorate the death of Christ, or marry according to the manners of Europeans." Among those who were to receive baptism on the Sabbath following this message, were six or eight persons nearly related to the royal family. On the day previous the displeasure of the queen was signified to them, and they were obliged to withdraw their names. The light was shining too near the throne, and the hand of the queen began to reach forth against it, as if it was in the power of mortals to put out the burning glory of the Lord.

Twenty of the natives received baptism on the 29th of May, 1831, when Mr. Griffiths, who still remained, officiated. A large and deeply-affected assembly witnessed the solemn ceremony. Eight others united with the new church in the suburbs of the city, of which Mr. Johns was pastor. Among these were a diviner and his wife, who had long given striking evidence of piety. The man had spent his life in jugglery and divinations; but to prove his sincerity he destroyed his charms, and

to k his place among the children as a pupil, that he might read for himself the wonderful story of the sacrifice of Jesus, who had become infinitely precious to him. He received the Christian name of Paul, and with his wife, set a blameless example; and labored with a zeal and faithfulness that brought many to the knowledge of Christ. These all partook of the Lord's Supper, and it was perceived by the government party that wine was employed. There was a law prohibiting the use of liquor, not at all observed in the palace, and frequently disregarded by the natives. But its use by the church gave an opportunity for persecution, and a message was sent from the queen that "it was contrary to the law to drink wine." The Christians were obliged either to conform, or to dispense with the sacrament. After prayer and deliberation, their pastors decided to use water instead of wine. By the end of the year there were seventy members in one church, and many had been added to the others.

Soon after this, a portion of the army was sent to subdue a southern province. Before leaving, one of the chief idols was carried between lines of the soldiers, and water was sprinkled upon them in token of the protection of the idol in battle. There were a number of Christians in this

army, and they requested permission to be absent from the ceremony, as they placed their trust only in the living God. Their request was granted; but in revenge they were put in the front ranks, and in the most exposed situations. Although a portion of the army was defeated, and many slain, it is said that not one of these faithful ones was harmed. During their absence they held meetings in their tents on the Sabbath and in the evenings, and by their influence and example induced many of their comrades to believe in God and Jesus Christ the Saviour. When they returned to Tananarivo, these accompanied them to the missionaries, and begged to be recognized as disciples.

This, together with the knowledge that numbers were daily forsaking their idols and flocking to the missionaries, alarmed the queen and her ministers. To check the growing faith, an order was issued debarring the soldiers and the scholars belonging to the government schools from being baptized or uniting with the church; and those who had already done so, were forbidden to partake of the Lord's Supper. This order was soon extended to all natives. They sat in silence, and in great distress of mind, with the Europeans who were allowed to unite in it. Nothing probably

could have so deepened and strengthened their love for the Saviour as this arbitrary prohibition; and the petty persecutions which followed whenever they appeared in public, only served to plant their feet more firmly on the rock Christ Jesus.

Among these people was a young slave, of dull mind and indolent habits, who, in attending his master's son to school, had himself learned to read the Bible. "He received the gospel like a little child." With the renewal of his heart, his mind received light, and his character a surprising degree of vigor. He felt the lowliness of his degree, but exclaimed, in his humility, "I am only a poor slave, but nevertheless I trust I love the Lord Jesus."

So prayerful, and so active was he in teaching others to read, that he was appointed a teacher in a school seventy miles distant from the capital. He was admitted to the church on the last Sabbath when the sacrament was allowed to be given to the natives. It was their habit to assume a baptismal name, which was frequently not made known to the pastor till the moment of baptism. When he came forward, he pronounced the singular name,

"Ra-poor-negro," meaning simply, "The poor negro."

"Ra-poor-negro, do you say?" asked Mr. Griffiths, with surprise.

"Yes," said he; "that is the name I wish to take," and thus he was baptized. He was afterward asked why he chose so singular a name.

"Oh," said he, "I had seen in your printing-office the tract of The Poor Negro, with a picture representing him with his knees bended and his eyes lifted up to heaven; and I thought, being a slave like him, there is nothing I so much desired as to become like him in disposition, and therefore I took his name."

Ra-poor-negro returned to his school and continued to teach with remarkable activity. But, after a short time, the news of his death followed the tidings of his good work. A Malagasy dreads death, and it is thought extremely unkind to speak of the subject to a sick friend. Even a strong man, manly in all else, will cry out in tearful distress on his death-bed, "I die, I die; O mother! O father! I die." The triumph and victory over death and the grave was therefore the more brightly manifest in the parting words of Ra-poor-negro, "I am going to Jehovah-Jesus; Jesus is fetching me; I do not fear!"

This first Christian death, so peaceful and so triumphant, was a fulfillment in the eyes of all the

native disciples of the promise, "He will swallow up death in victory," and enabled them to bear with renewed patience and sweetness the epithets of derision that met them every where.

The increased labors of the missionaries induced them to urge the coming of new helpers. By permission of the queen, Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson, from a station in South Africa, arrived in the autumn of 1831. They were permitted to remain only one year, as the government found they could not teach any new art, but only reading and writing. Some six hundred youths were under the instructions of Mr. Cameron, who taught them various mechanic arts. He had also superintended the construction of a canal between a river and a lake in the neighborhood of the capital. To these labors he united the influence of a Christian. Mr. Chick had a number of natives employed as smiths, and Mr. Canham had also apprentices in the useful arts, while both acted as missionaries of the gospel also. Mr. Baker had charge of the printing-press with a number of native workers. These occupations made the Europeans valuable to the Malagasy government, and caused them to tolerate Christianity to a certain extent, though it was daily becoming more evident that the schools were

obnoxious. Mr. Freeman, Mr. Griffiths, and Mr. Johns had the chief charge of these and of the churches. Mr. Jones had left Madagascar the previous year.

A public examination of the schools was held at the request of the government in the autumn of 1832, not so much to ascertain the progress as the numbers of the scholars. Rumors of a new invasion of the French had reached the capital, and, immediately after the examination, every one in the schools, over thirteen years of age, both pupils and teachers, was drafted into the army. Orders were then issued to the people to fill up the schools anew! They acquiesced by sending their slaves in place of their sons. To meet this, the queen forbade a slave to be taught to read or write, on penalty of the owner himself being reduced to slavery. Although these events were very discouraging, there was much still to induce the stay of the missionaries. Many who did not attend the schools, showed an eagerness to learn, that they might read the Bible for themselves. With such a motive, knowledge was easily and rapidly gained, and communicated from one to another. The natives were enough in earnest to build rude chapels for themselves, in the distant villages, to establish and sustain meet-

ings of prayer, and to gather not only from the highways and hedges all who would come in, but often those closely connected with the royal family or men in power.

The converts proved their sincerity by throwing away their charms and idols. About six miles from the capital, lived a chief who owned an idol that had been kept in his family for many generations. It consisted of silver rings, brass ornaments, and blocks of wood, together with six crocodile teeth, made of silver and hollow. These were filled with bits of wood which partook of the sacredness of the idol. Similar pieces of wood were hung upon it by a cord. The sale of these enabled the family to live in comfort. The chief had two sons, officers in the army, and to one of them was entrusted the sale of the relics, which were said to protect the wearer from the perils of battle, or from pestilence. The price of a single piece was two bullocks, two sheep, two goats, two fowls, and two dollars, beside other articles of less value.

The officer who carried on the traffic received a present of a Testament from Mr. Johns. The reading of this resulted in his conversion. To the dismay and grief of his parents, he would no longer sell the charms, and the family became

poor. Through his untiring exertions a few of his relatives espoused Christianity, but the rest reproached and persecuted him. His example, influence, and success in leading others to renounce idolatry, were such as to enrage the people, and he was accused of witchcraft to the queen, and condemned to trial by the tangena.

The tangena is a nut similar to the horse-chestnut. A small quantity of this is scraped off, and administered in water to the accused person. It will act either as an emetic or as poison, according to a slight variation in the quantity given; so that the life of the victim is in the hands of the person officiating. If he chances to escape death, he is considered innocent, and is expected to pay a certain sum; if he dies, he is pronounced guilty; one twenty-fourth of his property belongs to his executioner, and the rest to his accusers. "It is given," say the diviners, "by God to men to be a test of actions. It is infallible in its decisions, and just in its effects. It is a cordial to the innocent, but death to the guilty."

The friends of the young officer entreated him to secure the services of the diviners in his behalf, or to avert danger by bribing them; but he would do neither one nor the other, and committed himself to God. To the astonishment and delight of

his friends, he passed through the ordeal unharmed. They began to lose faith in the tangena. His father and mother received him with joy, listened to his appeals, which they had before violently opposed, and finally gave up the idol so long regarded with veneration. The son stripped it of its ornaments and buried it, but afterward recovered and gave it to Mr. Johns, who sent it to England.

Such events encouraged the missionaries, and they continued to provide and circulate the New Testament, with portions of the Old, and other books, as fast as they could be translated into the Malagasy language. In 1833, fifteen thousand copies were printed, and six thousand immediately distributed. So general was the interest, and so rapidly was instruction communicated from one to another, that at this time, says one of the members of the mission, "few families were to be found, from the immediate connections of the sovereign to the humblest slaves, who could not number among their near relatives some who were the disciples of the Saviour." There were persons near the queen who perceived the state of things, and felt that the time had come when either idolatry or Christianity must fall. There were three brothers, one commander-in-chief of the army, another first officer of the police, the third a judge;

these held supreme power, swaying the will of the queen to their own purposes, though with Jesuitical cunning and assumed humility. It was through their efforts that the queen issued an order in 1834, that no natives should learn to read or write, except the children in the schools. This it was thought would check the further spread of the gospel. In addition, Mr. Canham, whose ten years had expired, was dismissed from the island, and no entreaties could prolong his stay.

The long expected storm was gathering closer and darker. All Madagascar began to feel the gloom of the overcast sky. But God was able to stay the tempest till his own work was accomplished. The full time had not yet come. Meanwhile the three emmissaries of Satan in the palace were plotting and lying in wait for opportunity to afflict the Christians. As a test, an idol was sent to one of their nephews, a sincere convert, with directions that he should take charge of it, and on a coming festival day should sacrifice a bullock and eat of it in honor of the idol. He utterly refused to do this, which fact was reported to the government. Another Christian was heard to say to his relatives that the idols could do neither good nor harm, and was seen to work on a sacred day. This was also announced to the queen by her

advisers, who were watching like wild beasts for their prey. The queen was taken very ill, and messengers were sent to a distant village to obtain a powerful charm for her recovery. They were told by a Christian that "the true God was the only restorer of health and preserver of life," and that "multitudes in the country held the same opinion." This again was repeated to Ranavalona, and she was assured that the foreigners were thus alienating her people, and causing them to despise the gods of the land. The anger of the queen was excited; but still she did not undertake severe measures. To stimulate her to this, one of her ministers took the occasion of a complaint made against a Christian to bring an accusation before the judges against him and all "believers," as they were called in derision, and requested the government to interfere. The substance of the charges was as follows: —

They despise the idols of the land.

They are always praying.

They will not swear by the opposite sex.

Their women are chaste.

They are all of one mind respecting their religion.

They observe the Sabbath as a sacred day.

They scruple to tell lies.

What a testimony to the faithful purity of those Christians! Even the chief judge before whom the young man was brought could find no sufficient cause of punishment, and dismissed him. But the officers who had assisted in the accusations did not mean to be thwarted thus, and brought the acquitted to the notice of the queen, who immediately condemned him to the tangena. He was mercifully preserved from death, and declared innocent. Thus the enemies of truth and purity once more were foiled.

Soon after, the queen was riding out in her palanquin accompanied by nobles, officers, and singing-women. It was the Sabbath, and as she passed the chapel the hymns of praise sung by the congregation within reached her ear. "They will not stop till some of them lose their heads," was the threat with which she greeted the unwelcome sound. That any one should presume to oppose her will was sufficient of itself to excite her anger; and the daily proofs that met her of the continued growth of the new religion, in spite of her various efforts to check it, created an intense desire to strike the whole people a blow which should inspire them with terror, and teach them not to presume to choose any but those gods whom she worshiped. Her power and pride were in

the balance, and her advisers knew well how to make them weigh heavily on the side of persecution.

At this time of suspense among the Christians, a chief of high rank came to the palace, and asked an audience of the queen. When brought to her presence he said, "I am come to ask your majesty for a spear; a bright and sharp spear. Grant my request."

When asked the reason of the demand, he enumerated the offenses of the Christians; said that the hearts of the people were already more devoted to their new religion than to their queen, and declared it to be the intention of the missionaries to deliver Madagascar into the hands of foreigners, when the people and their slaves were sufficiently turned away from the customs of their ancestors.

"Such will be the issue of the teaching by the foreigners," he continued; "and I do not wish to live to see that calamity come upon our country, —to see our own slaves employed against us; therefore I ask a spear to pierce my heart, that I may die before that evil day comes."

The queen was moved with grief and rage. She wept, and was "silent for a cooking of rice!" (half an hour)? The music was ordered to cease,

and profound stillness reigned. Amusements were forbidden, and during a fortnight the appearance of the palace was that of mourning. Edict after edict was sent out from the queen with the intention to "put an end to Christianity, if it cost the life of every Christian in the island." The people were forbidden to observe the Sabbath, to read the Bible, to pray, to use the name of Jehovah, Christ, or to speak of the devil. Disobedience to these requirements was punished with death, confiscation of property, and the slavery of the surviving family. They were forbidden even to *think* of what they had been taught, and were required to forget it entirely.

A great "kabary" of the nation was convened to hear the will of the queen. The hearts of the people stood still with fear. The day came at last, ushered in by the firing of cannon. One hundred and fifty thousand persons stood before the chief officers and judges, who were to make known the edict of the queen. Their authority was supported by the presence of fifteen thousand troops under arms. The edict condemned every believer to death who did not come forward and accuse himself within a month. Many were the offenses it enumerated. "As to your mode of swearing," said the indignant queen, "the answer

you are giving is 'True', and when you are asked, 'Do you swear it?' you reply 'True.' I wonder at this. What, indeed, is that word 'True'?" In this manner the Christians were censured and denounced.

A chief ventured to intercede, saying that all they had done had been sanctioned both by Radama and by herself, and proposed a peace-offering. The only answer was, "Accuse yourselves or die, and that within a week instead of a month!" This was done. Those of rank or occupying positions of honor were degraded, and the humble were fined according to the extent of their observance of Christian duties. And now came the trial of those who remained faithful. Many were forced to deliver up all the Bibles and other books in their possession; but they refused to worship idols even at the risk of their lives. Neither were they willing to forsake prayer and praise; but continued to meet in secret, comforting each other and declaring that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor hight, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Those who had become disciples from interested motives returned to idola-

try, not being able to bear scorn and reproach, poverty and death. Even now the chaff was being divided from the wheat.

The storm that had so long been anticipated by the missionaries had burst at last. The whole Bible was immediately completed in the Malagasy language; printed and bound in large numbers, and partly distributed. The natives were not allowed to assist; but two of the missionaries devoted themselves to the labor and had the happiness to complete it. Testaments, hymn-books, spelling-books, catechisms, and tracts had already been scattered all over the island, and in such numbers that the most rigorous search could not find them. More than this, God had touched the souls of thousands with his Spirit. They were Christ's, and no mortal was able to take them from him. Though the queen commanded her subjects to forget their instructions, it was neither in her power to enforce obedience, nor in theirs to obey, for the Holy Spirit quickened every heart and memory till each precious promise glowed with sacred fire as if written there by the finger of God. This the missionaries knew, and praised the Lord for it.

The queen gave permission to the Europeans to continue their own customs, and to teach the arts,

on condition that not another word of Christianity should be uttered to a native. To this of course they could not consent, and as their presence increased the danger of their former pupils, and as they could no longer afford help or consolation to the persecuted, they signified their intention of leaving Madagascar, with the exception of Mr. Johns and Mr. Baker, who decided to remain a short time longer in order to complete an English and Malagasy dictionary. It was surprising that the government permitted this, or the finishing of the Scriptures, especially the latter. Confusion must have been in their councils, and their understandings must have been blinded by an Almighty power so that they knew not where to strike the decisive blow, else they would long ago have put an end to the printing of words that were like wedges driven into the very foundation of the unrighteous throne.

On the eighteenth of June, 1835, Mr. and Mrs. Freeman, Mr. and Mrs. Cameron, and Mr. and Mrs. Chick left Tananarivo, leaving their precious charge, not to the cruel mercies of the wicked, but in the keeping of that powerful Redeemer who hears the cry of his suffering people, and is able to sustain them triumphantly through the sharpest afflictions. The queen cherished no per-

sonal dislike to the missionaries; but they had been warned of her severest displeasure at the slightest evasion of her commands. They had been strictly watched since the issuing of the edict, probably with the desire to discover some excuse for violence; but their conduct in all matters was blameless. "The righteousness of the upright shall deliver him." These men of God went safely out of the lion's den rejoicing that they had been protected till their work was done.

Immediately after their departure, the native servants who had been in their employment were seized, imprisoned, and condemned to trial by the tangena. Two of them being pronounced guilty were barbarously murdered.

Infanticide was revived, new idols were brought to the capital, the road to the sea-coast was destroyed, and a new and more difficult route commanded to be used in order to render access to the capital difficult both to foreigners and rebellious subjects. Heavy taxes were imposed upon the people in addition to the burden of supporting the army, both by unrequited labor and by the gift of their sons. This reduced many to the most abject poverty; forced them to become banditti, and obtain by robbery what they were not permitted to earn. The mountains and highways had come to

be dangerous on account of these roving bands. Although two hundred men were taken and speared, burnt or poisoned, as an example to inspire fear, the number increased yet more rapidly. In alarm and rage, some of the government officers asked Mr. Johns what could be done to remedy the evil.

"By ceasing to oppress the people, allowing them to reap the fruits of their own industry, and to be taught to read the Bible," was the unwelcome reply. Provoked at this advice, they only increased in their cruelty, and sent divisions of the army in various directions to subdue the disobedient. In some of the provinces allegiance to the queen had been refused. In the south, submission was offered on the approach of the army; but after disarming the captives, ten thousand were treacherously drawn into a place from which they could not escape; the whole were assassinated in cold blood, and their wives and children reduced to slavery.

In the midst of such atrocities Mr. Johns and Mr. Baker continued their labors unmolested. They finished the dictionary, and had printed a portion of the Pilgrim's Progress, when an event occurred which hastened their departure. The Christians had not given up all their Bibles.

Some hid them under the floor beneath their beds and read them secretly after midnight. The slaves of a pious woman named Rafaravavy, betrayed her in this, and also accused her of observing the Sabbath and conversing upon religion. She was imprisoned, fined, and in daily expectation of death, till released with the threat of severer measures in case of a second offense. She cherished no resentment against her accusers, though of her own household; but forgave and affectionately prayed for them. This, with the fact that British vessels on the coast had given refuge to many fugitives from cruelty, caused the order for the missionaries remaining to leave, which they did, with great sorrow at parting with the people, in July, 1836. They had dwelt safely under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty till their part in his great work was done. The people had been taught to read; the Bible was wholly completed and left in their hands, to be the sole preacher during twenty-five years of extreme suffering.

CHAPTER VII.

MARTYRDOMS.

Brief respite of the Persecution — Death of a young Christian — The Cruelties Renewed — Rafaravavy — Rasalama, the first Martyr — Courage of Rafaralahy — His Arrest and Execution — Flight of Rafaravavy and her Companions — Itanimanina — Second Flight — Her Letter — Reaches Tamatave — Hardships and Dangers — Escape to Mauritius — The Queen incensed — Arrest of suspected Persons — Scourging — Martyrdom of Ravahiny — Of nine Christians — Efforts of Mr. Johns to mitigate the Persecution — Great Numbers reduced to Slavery — Continued Executions.

From 1836 to 1861, — twenty-five years, — the missionaries, full of strong love and sympathy, were compelled to stand afar off and watch the dark cloud that hung over Madagascar. Sometimes the gloomy vail was lifted enough to give them glimpses of the Christians bowing under the weight of suffering; but still praying and praising. It was enough to assure them that the Word of God was proving itself "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." At every lifting of the black mists from the mountain-tops, they could behold, as in a vision, Christ sitting as a refiner and purifier, and catch the shining glory of the presence of the Lord in that afflicted land. There was enough to exalt their hearts with joy even

while they shed tears of pity. Traders were permitted for a few years to touch at the coast, and although the natives were forbidden to write, tidings were obtained by this means, at distant intervals, of their welfare. For some months after the departure of the missionaries, the queen's government did little to molest the Christians. A merciful God granted them a respite in which they might gather strength for the weary years of persecution that were to follow through the greater part of a generation. During these few months of intermitted trial, they met frequently, though in secret, in lonely places, for reading the Scriptures, for worship, and for mutual comfort and strengthening against the impending sorrow.

During this time, the fear hanging over them might have been expected to separate from them so many of the timid and half-hearted as much to diminish their numbers. On the contrary, their numbers increased. One young man, however, peculiarly honored and loved by them, died at this time. So deep was his love for the Saviour during health, that the name of Jesus always brought tears to his eyes. When asked why was this, he simply answered, "How can it be otherwise when I recall his love unto death for me?" On his death-bed he was asked if he was afraid.

"Why should I fear to die," he answered, "when Jesus is my friend? He hath loved me with an everlasting love, and I love him because he hath first loved me. I am persuaded that he will not leave me now, for I am full of joy at the thought of leaving this sinful world to be for ever with him." And so he fell asleep, and was taken away from the evil to come.

When the queen and her counselors saw the failure of their hopes of the speedy decrease of the Christians, which they had reckoned on as certain to follow the banishment of the missionaries and the measures of repression already adopted, and found that the hated people were increasing instead of diminishing, they resolved upon harsher means. One Sabbath day, when a band of disciples had met upon a mountain to read, sing, and pray, they were discovered and reported to the queen. Among them was Rafaravavy. Her house was searched, and near it was found, buried, a box of Bibles, and other books given her by the missionaries. In revenge, her house was given up to plunder, and she was loaded with heavy irons and imprisoned. Threats were employed to extort from her any information concerning her companions; but she remained silent, firm, and looked with cheerful composure for the death certainly in

store. A fire, however, breaking out in the capital, alarmed the superstition of the queen, and saved her life. She was reserved for much suffering, but not for martyrdom.

The first martyr of the Malagasy church was a young woman named Rasalama. She had been condemned to perpetual slavery; but an expression of her joy that she was counted worthy to suffer for Jesus brought upon her the sentence of death. Before suffering it, she was loaded with irons and severely beaten. But so long as she had strength she comforted herself by singing her favorite hymns. Her fortitude confounded her enemies, who could only attribute it to some charm. They did not see the One with her, whose form was as the Son of God.

The afternoon before her execution, the ordinary chains she wore were exchanged for others, consisting of rings and bars fastened around her neck, arms, feet, and knees, forcing her into a position of great agony. In this torture she passed the night. But the morning brought her an everlasting rest. As she was led away to the place of execution she continued to sing. Passing the chapel, she said, "There I heard the words of the Saviour!" Her Christian friends, deeply as they sympathized with her, were deterred, by fear

DEATH OF RASALAMA.

of the certain consequences, from openly expressing their sympathy. One young man, however, named Rafaralahy, breaking through all timidity, came and walked by her side, saying, "My sister, I will not leave you till the end." Thus the gloomy procession reached the place of execution. The name of this is Ambohipotsy. It forms the southern extremity of the crest of the hill upon which the city stands.

The victims were made to kneel on the ground, when two spears were thrust into their bodies from behind, one on each side of the back-bone. They were then beheaded, and their bodies often left lying on the ground. Such a fate Rasalama was about to undergo. But the sight of the place of death did not shake the peace of God which she enjoyed. Her only request to the executioners was that she might be allowed a brief season of prayer; and whilst thus engaged in communion with her Saviour the thrust of the spears ended her sufferings, and brought her face to face with him for whose sake she "loved not her life unto the death."

Thus died the first martyr of Madagascar. One of the missionaries writes of her: "Never in the annals of the church did a martyr suffer from motives more pure, simple, and unmixed with earthly

alloy. She had never heard of any after-glory of martyrdom on earth. No external splendor had been cast around the subject in her mind by reading any lives of martyrs. All was to her obloquy and contempt." No wonder that her calm nobility of aspect so impressed the rude executioners that they were constrained to say, "There is some charm in the religion of the white people that takes away the dread of death;" while the young man who had braved the danger of accompanying her, exclaimed, as he turned away from the spot where the martyr had rendered up her soul, "Could I but die so tranquil and happy a death, I should be willing to die for the Saviour, too!"

In time he had an opportunity of making good his declarations. Several of the companions of Rasalama, who had been condemned to perpetual slavery, were sold to masters living near his house, which was about ten miles out of Tananarivo, and among them was Rafaravavy. This pious woman had by the special kindness of Providence been sold to a humane master, whose wife, moreover, proved to be a relative of her own. She was therefore allowed some liberty, which she gladly improved by visits to the houses of her fellow-Christians. The central point of these gatherings

was the house of Rafaralahy, the young man who had comforted Rasalama at the last. He devoted his time and his property to doing good, built a house for the secret worship of the Christians, and endeavored, not unsuccessfully, to bring others into the way of the Lord. There were three poor lepers whom their loathsome malady made outcasts and abhorred of all. But Rafaralahy fed them, sheltered them, and taught them to read the Book of life. There is reason to hope that all three are now with their benefactor in that land where "the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick, and the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."

At length a debtor of Rafaralahy's, and one whom it appears he had treated with much kindness, thought to rid himself of his obligations by denouncing his benefactor to the government. He accused him of being a Christian, and of holding meetings in his house. Rafaralahy was seized, loaded with chains, and cast into prison. But the God of Rasalama showed himself to be his God. They were anxious to get from him the names of his friends, but his constant answer was, "Here am I; let the queen do what she pleases with me. I have done it; but I will not accuse

my friends." Accordingly he was condemned to death.

When the executioner entered the prison and asked, "Which is Rafaralahy?" the brave man promptly answered, "I am." As he walked to the place of execution, not now as the comforter, but as the doomed, he did not, like Rasalama, sing, but he testified to the spectators his joy in the near prospect of beholding the Saviour. Like Rasalama, he requested a brief space for prayer; and kneeling on the ground "consecrated by her blood and strewed with her unburied bones," he committed his spirit to his Divine Redeemer. Then rising, he said, "I am ready;" and requesting them not to bind him, as it would not be necessary, he lay down on the ground and received the fatal thrust.

After Rafaralahy's death, his wife and another woman were seized and tortured, to force a disclosure of his associates. In the weakness of pain and fear they gave up their names. But Rafaravavy was apprised of the danger in time to flee, and with her, four other Christians, two men and two women.

A place called Itanimanina, fifty miles from the capital, was the residence of a Christian family. Hither the fugitives fled, assisted on their way by

those of like faith, who for the sake of Christ dared incur the risk of the queen's anger. Most of the night after their arrival at Itanimanina was spent by them, notwithstanding the fatigue of their journey, in prayer and praise. Three of them, named Joseph, Simeon, and David, went on further and sought a hiding-place in the forest. Here they were cared for by a noble-hearted man, a servant of the government, who alone knew their secret abode. Often did this devoted friend and fellow-Christian traverse the rugged roads and tangled forest for a distance of fifty or sixty miles with a heavy burden of rice. Thus by self-sacrificing love and labor they were sustained nearly six months, when it became necessary for them to seek another refuge.

But it was against Rafaravavy that the anger of the queen was particularly directed. She still remained at Itanimanina. To avoid the messengers of death, who were hunting her, she every morning left the house, and concealed herself among the rocks. Her hiding-place was discovered, and one day soldiers hastened to it, expecting to find her there. But, through a good Providence, Rafaravavy, owing to the rain, had that day not left the house. The soldiers then hastened thither, now sure of their prey. But He who sent the ravens

to feed Elijah now sent the crows to save his handmaiden. Some of these birds, being alarmed by the coming of the soldiers, made a noise which drew the attention of Rafaravavy's companion, Sarah, who running out to see what was the matter was able to give Rafaravavy notice in time for her to hide under a bedstead and cover herself with mats. The soldiers, not seeing Rafaravavy, supposed she was not there. They remained in the house long enough, however, for her to hear the bloody purposes of the cruel Ranavalona towards her. But there was fulfilled to her the promise, "Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh. For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall withhold thy foot from being taken."

Rafaravavy, Sarah, and their kind protectors, were now obliged to seek an asylum still further away from the capital where Satan's seat was. About a hundred soldiers were searching for them. Their flight, therefore, was one of imminent peril and many hair-breadth escapes. At one time they lay hid all night in a pit. Once, as they were secreting themselves, they saw the soldiers pass by in their search for them. Again, as they reached the crest of a hill, they saw a party of soldiers coming right towards them. The rest

took to flight, but Rafaravavy, who could not run, plunged into a bog, where she lay half buried in the mire, and covered with rushes, and so was saved.

Thus through much weariness and many dangers, they at last reached the house of the friend with whom they hoped for a refuge. As he saw them, he burst into tears of joy and sympathy. For three months he entertained them, concealing the tent which he pitched for them in the midst of the high grass of a plantation which he owned, and from which he warned off all trespassers. This retreat of theirs was spent in those exercises of Christian devotion and those studies of God's Word which were the more precious because the enjoyment must be thus stealthily snatched. Nor were these hours of holy communion fruitful only to themselves. Other Christians who had not yet drawn the eye of the persecuting queen upon themselves, joined with them, and even some unbelievers were admitted. Nearly twenty in this way learned to read. Nor was the kindness of their host unrewarded. Several members of his family were at this time brought to the Lord.

"Blessed be God," wrote Rafaravavy, "who hath given us access by Jesus Christ. My earnest prayer to God is, that he would enable me to obey

the words of Jesus to his disciples, Matt. xvi. 24. Hence, none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself that I may finish my course in the service I have received of the Lord Jesus. Do not you, missionaries, grieve under an idea that your labor here has been in vain in the Lord; through the blessing of God, it succeeds. 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; but it is the power of God to them that believe.' Here is my ground of confidence; the power of God can not be effectually resisted. I will go in the strength of the Lord. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for God is with me."

At last the soldiers, wearied with their fruitless search, returned to the capital. The hunted Christians now began to breathe more freely. At this time, however, a letter from a friend informed them that Mr. Johns had come to Tamatave to assist their escape. They were at once glad and perplexed to hear this. Their perplexity arose from the fact that Tamatave is on the eastern coast, while their present place of refuge was west of the capital, and so situated that they must pass through it to reach Tamatave. However, they adventured themselves once more into the lion's den, and the Lord sent his angel and stopped the

mouths of the lions. Rafaravavy was even recognized as she passed through Tananarivo by a slave, who reported her to her former master. He, however, perhaps in the kindness of his heart, took no notice of the information. The little party thus passed unhurt under the very shadow of the palace, where the cruel queen sat plotting their destruction, and after many perils and hardships reached the coast. They were obliged to cross a river full of crocodiles, with no other means of transit than the government boat. Happily, however, the government ferryman did not know them, and set them over without inquiry. At length they beheld the sea, that dreaded sea, which to many a captive Malagasy has awakened terrors like the terrors of death, when he first beheld it from the weeping-place of the inner hights, and knew that it would soon separate him for ever from all that he had known and loved. But to the hunted Christians, the broad waters spread themselves out with a face of welcome. Dear as their native land was, the ruthless queen had made it full of terror to them; while beyond the sea they knew that whatever else was strange, they should find the one thing most precious, — the communion of saints.

Disguised as sailors, they at last, in company

with Mr. Johns, made their escape to Mauritius. They afterwards visited England, and every where were received as it became Christ's people to treat those who for his sake had suffered the loss of all things.

Themselves in safety, their hearts turned with anxious interest to their brethren and sisters who were yet in the tyrant's power. Their solicitude was increased by the contents of a letter which they received from some of them, announcing that orders had been given by the government, that wherever Christians were found a pit should be dug on the spot, and that, having been thrust into it head-foremost, boiling water should be poured upon them till they were dead. It does not appear that any actually suffered under this cruel order; but the apprehension of it may well have filled their minds, and those of their escaped friends, with cruel anxiety. The writers of the letter add, "We have heard of the orders of the queen respecting us, and in what manner we are to be put to death. We still confide in the compassion of the Saviour; but we ask, 'Can you do any thing to rescue us?' We think of the death awaiting us. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

The fury of the queen had indeed burst forth

with redoubled fierceness, when she learned the escape of the victims she had set her heart on having. Disappointed of them, she was determined to find others. Hitherto, persecution had only touched those who were positively known to be Christians. But now a mere suspicion was sufficient. A woman living in the capital, who was thus suspected, was seized and beaten to extort a confession. During the scourging, a Bible fell from her dress. No other proof was needed. She was scourged again, even to fainting, to extort from her the names of her companions. But no torture could shake her faithful constancy, and so they escaped, while she was sentenced to perpetual slavery.

A second martyrdom now ushered in many more. This one was an illustration of our Saviour's saying: "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." The martyr was a young woman named Ravahiny, whose eminent piety peculiarly endeared her to her Christian associates, and in the same measure provoked the bitter vexation and hatred of her heathen relatives. Her husband repudiated her; her father's house was closed against her, and her whole circle of relatives participated in the aversion of her nearest connections. Not content with this, they pro-

cured against her a sentence of perpetual slavery. Finding even this not enough to satisfy their hatred, they plotted against her till at last they obtained a decree that she should drink the tangena, or ordeal cup. As they expected, and perhaps contrived, the ordeal proved fatal, and Ravahiny joined Rasalama in glory.

But these isolated martyrdoms were far from satisfying the rage of the heathen. Early in 1840, fourteen Christians who had set out towards the sea-coast in the hope of escaping like Rafaravavy and her companions, were apprehended and brought back. Mr. Johns had at this time ventured to revisit Madagascar, and to come to Tananarivo, hoping to do something to mitigate the sufferings of the Christians. The melancholy intelligence met him on his arrival. He learned that sixteen had started for Tamatave, and after long wanderings reached a village called Beforona, not very far distant from the coast. Here they were arrested on suspicion of being malefactors. An examination of several days had elicited nothing of importance, when they resolved to declare boldly who they were. Accordingly, one speaking for the rest, said, "Since you ask us again and again who we are, we will tell you. We are not robbers nor murderers; we are praying

people. If that makes us guilty in the dominions of the queen, we are ready to suffer." "Is this, then," inquired the officer, "your final answer, whether for life or death?" "It is our final answer, whether for life or death," they replied.

They were bound and carried to the capital. There each was subjected to a separate examination, but all remained firm and witnessed a good confession. Mr. Johns was greatly distressed, knowing that appeals to the mercy or to the justice of the inexorable queen would be alike vain. All that he and the Christians who met with him in secret could do, was to commend their imprisoned brethren to the grace of God, that they might not faint or fall away in the prospect of death. And their prayer was abundantly answered.

Not long after his arrival, Mr. Johns heard one morning the booming of cannon. This unusual sound he knew portended something extraordinary.

He soon learned the melancholy tidings it was meant to communicate. Nine of the imprisoned Christians were to die that day. They were all well-known and dear to the missionary. One of them, who bore the Christian name of Josiah, had been a faithful preacher of the gospel before the persecution, and afterwards an eminent helper and

strengthener of his afflicted brethren. With agonizing anxiety, the missionary and his fellow-Christians waited to hear that all was over; and soon after mid-day the echo of a gun which burst in the discharge, announced that these nine souls had been added to "the noble army of the martyrs."

At this same time there were some two hundred Christians, "destitute, afflicted, tormented, who wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth," and whose condition called forth the strong sympathy and solicitude of many British Christians. The Directors of the London Missionary Society instructed their devoted missionary, Mr. Johns, to spare neither labor nor expense to rescue their persecuted brethren from death. But all devices to effect the escape of any from the island proved ineffectual. The queen's government used redoubled diligence and severity. A letter to Mr. Johns from some of the Christians held as government slaves says, "The sufferings of the people are unutterable. Do rescue us, beloved father, if possible. . . . If God help us not we are dead men. . . . . Our government service continues very severe. When the children of Israel labored under Pharoah perhaps they obtained some little respite, at

any rate by night; but *ours* is incessant labor! We must work both day and night."

Indeed, so determined was the government, not only to afflict the Christians, but to wear them out, that in order to accomplish this result, two of the conditions on which they were sold were, first, that under no circumstances should they be sold to friends; and secondly, that those who bought them should engage to keep them continually at heavy work. The decree against them set forth that it was the queen's determination that they should be as weeds of the waste, bowing down their heads till they died."

In 1842, five more were added to the honored roll of Madagascar martyrs. Like many previous sufferers, they were put to the torture to extract from them the names of their companions; but their faithfulness could not be shaken. Just before their deaths, a messenger from their fellow-Christians found his way to them, to whom they whispered, "Let them not fear that we shall disclose their names. Bid them for us farewell, in hope of a meeting hereafter." They were executed in the market-place of Vonizongo, and their heads fixed on poles for a terror to others.

In an affecting letter written about this time, one of the native Christians says: "Our trials are

greater than ever, and the number of the persecuted is increasing daily. The officers of the queen are searching for them every where, to put them to death. We do not know what to do, as the road, in almost all directions, is impassable, and our hiding-places are nearly all known to our enemies."

Writes another: "These trials are heavy to flesh and blood, but are even light to be borne by the mind and soul that lean upon the Lord. . . . I told you in a former letter that the queen ordered tangena to be given me, but by the blessing of God I got over it. Join me, O my beloved friend! in praising the Lord, who hath blessed me and preserved me alive. Five of our friends are hiding themselves with me, and I shall take particular care of them; but others go from place to place to seek for something to support nature.

Three more in October suffered for their Saviour. One, Raharo, perished under the ordeal; another, Ratsimilary, being detected in endeavoring to save his friend from its effects, was condemned to death; while a third, Imamonjy, was sentenced with him to be cut into small pieces and then burnt.

The great comfort of the Christians in all their wanderings and sufferings was, next to the presence of the Saviour, through His Spirit and the

Word of God. But by constant use, and frequent burials in the ground, for better concealment, many of their Bibles had become almost worn out. What they longed for above all was a new supply of this precious treasure. "Exceedingly afflicted are we," they write, "on account of the fewness of the Bibles here with us, and we exceedingly desire to have more. We are thirsting for them; for the Bible is our companion and friend, to instruct and search in thoroughly when in secrecy and silence, and to comfort us in our grief and tribulation. Send us *many*, for even then they will not be enough; and let them be of small print, so as to be easily hidden." They also give intelligence that on the Sabbaths the men would walk long distances to have a secure retreat so as to worship God in safety. But the women could not walk so far, which grieved them much.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRINCE RAKOTO — FRESH PERSECUTIONS.

A Contrast — RAKOTO-RADAMA, Son of the Queen, the Friend of the Christians — His Education and Character — His Mother's Affection for Him — An Admirer of Europeans — Mr. Laborde — Kindness to shipwrecked Sailors — Hated by the Heathen Party — Plots to kill Him — Renewed Persecutions — Accusations against the Christians — Trial and Condemnation — Fourteen thrown down a Precipice — Burning of the Nobles — Memory of the Martyrs Cherished — Numbers fined and enslaved — Letter of a Native Christian — "The Blood of the Martyrs the Seed of the Church."

THE reign of the cruel queen, Ranavalona, ranges side by side with that of Victoria of England; and the Princess Royal, whose bridal was graced with one of the gorgeous flowers of Madagascar, could have turned her eyes, that happy day, toward the hills where they blossomed, and have seen the martyrs ascending from their clouded tops in chariots of fire.

The severest persecution occurred in 1849. The presumed reason for redoubled cruelty was that the only son of the queen was associated with the Christians, who were believed to have employed a powerful charm or witchcraft to convert him. This son was born a year after the death of Rada-

ma. According to the custom of that preëminently licentious country, he was called the son of Radama, and was the appointed successor to the throne. He was but six years old when the last English resident was expelled from the capital, and had received no instructions whatever, either before or after the departure of the missionaries. Beloved and petted as an only child; guarded from contact with the hated Christians; taught by example to trust in idols; to revere the Vazimbas; to regulate his conduct by divinations of stones, and beans or sticks; a daily witness of open immorality, and of hourly executions of the most brutal character, it was natural that his twentieth year should find him as accomplished in wickedness as his mother. Add to this an impulsive temperament, a character not strong to resist the influence of those around him, and an almost chivalrous devotion to his mother, and what could be expected but the development of a prince fit to be the heir of a Jezebel?

And yet this was not true of him. There was not, in all that palace of iniquity, so gentle, so humane, so amiable a person as Rakoto-Radama. In person, he is described by those who have seen him as "short in stature, but well-proportioned, with broad shoulders and ample chest. His head

small, his hair jet-black and somewhat curling; his forehead slightly retreating and round; his eyes small, but clear and penetrating; his features somewhat European in form; his lips full; his nose aquiline, and his chin slightly projecting." Another says, "His features wear an expression of such childlike goodness that one feels drawn toward him from the first moment of seeing him." A frank truthfulness of character, a strong love of justice, and a remarkable sense of the sacredness of human life, were traits as apparent as wonderful.

Having a mind ready to appreciate what is just and lovely, it is not surprising that he was strongly drawn to the proscribed Christians when their faith was unfolded to him. When he was seventeen, a young man who occasionally obtained admittance to the palace with his uncle, contrived to bring his faith to the notice and interest of Rakoto, and induced him to accompany him to hear one Rainaka, who boldly preached the gospel, notwithstanding threats and decrees. "From this time," writes one of the natives, "he was very diligent in conversing with us on the subject of Christianity, and at length he invited some of us into his house in the palace-yard, to talk with him

in secret; and we were thus frequently invited to his house."

It was not long before the fact of his having joined the Christians was made known to the queen. One of the ministers, — their most bitter persecutor, — thinking to increase her hatred, said to her, —

"Your son, madam, is a Christian. He prays with the Christians, and encourages them in this new doctrine. We are lost if your majesty does not stop the prince in this strange way."

"But," replied the queen, "he is my son, — my only, my beloved son! Let him do what he pleases. If he wishes to become a Christian, let him. He is my beloved son!"

From this time, Rakoto was at his mother's side, uniting most filial devotion to entreaties to spare the lives of her subjects. It made no difference whether the sufferers were slaves or nobles, friends or enemies; they shared his sympathy alike. It seems surprising that such a prince could have been the son of such a mother, and that qualities like his could have been nourished amid such iniquitous surroundings. Just as the beautiful orchids clustered and blossomed upon the bared and knotted arms of the old decaying giants of his native forests, he throve upon the

topmost branch of royalty, drawing unconsciously all eyes upon so much apparent goodness blossoming in the midst of miasma and death.

It is no wonder that the Christians — grateful as they were for this powerful friend, raised up to them from the very seat of cruelty — could hardly say too much in praise of the young prince. They confidently believed that God had touched his heart with his own love. And, indeed, during all the time of persecution, Rakoto's character appeared in its best light. Thus Christendom came to regard him as personally a Christian, awaiting only the termination of his mother's reign to avow himself openly such, and to prove a second Constantine. It was not known, what his short reign afterwards too plainly showed, that he was at bottom conceited, frivolous, and licentious. But whatever he was, he was an instrument in the hands of God to lighten somewhat the heavy burdens of his people, lest they should be wholly overborne, and the church be blotted out of Madagascar.

He never concealed his acts from his mother. It is said she and others knew perfectly what he did. Although the knowledge that her only son and heir was a friend of the people whom she hated with all the strength of her savage and idol-

atrous heart, must have increased the rage of the queen against them, yet parental affection is a feature so peculiarly strong in the Malagasy character, that even this bloody woman could not resist its power.

Prince Rakoto had heard much of the people and governments of Europe, and possibly had some boyish impressions of the English during the latter part of their stay. His admiration for them was unbounded, and doubtless was the occasion of as much vexation to the queen as his forsaking the customs of his ancestors in their idolatry and superstition. His earliest, and for a long time only acquaintance with Europeans was in the person of Mr. Laborde, the son of a French saddler, who in the accidents of a roving life was shipwrecked on the island of Madagascar, brought to Tananarivo, and sold as a slave. He was exceedingly ingenious, and the story of some of his achievements soon reached the ear of the queen. She immediately offered him his freedom if he would labor for her during five years. He established a workshop, and commenced the manufacture of arms, succeeding so admirably that, like Laban, the queen doubled the time of his service. Though this removed the sweetness of freedom five years longer, he applied himself to other

branches of industry, opening works for glass-blowing, indigo-dyeing, soap and tallow-boiling, and a distillery for rum. With French facility, he added to all these vegetable-growing; and the numerous lightning-rods conspicuous all over the capital give further proof of his activity and his humane efforts to save life. Thunder-storms are so frequent and severe there, that it is said "about three hundred persons are killed by lightning annually" in the capital alone. So useful a person soon became a favorite of the government, and obtained much influence with the queen. She gave him houses, lands, slaves; and he married a native wife, thus fixing his residence, and apparently satisfied with his prosperity. He lived as the nobles, and was able to entertain his guests at a table furnished with china and silver plate. Although a Catholic, he evidently favored the Christians, interceded with the queen in their behalf, and relieved their distress whenever it was possible. This was sufficient to attract the devoted friendship of Prince Rakoto. It was probably through him that the prince obtained much of his knowledge of Europe.

European sailors were occasionally brought to Tananarivo to be sold as slaves; it being one of the queen's barbarous laws to enslave all the peo-

ple who were shipwrecked on her coasts. It expressed her hatred of foreigners. But the prince was as full of love and mercy toward them as she was of hatred. He was not independent of his mother's purse, being provided by her with a residence and the few luxuries that a Malagasy prince needs, and therefore, if his heart suggested it, he would not have been able to become the master of the unfortunate sailors. On one occasion, when riding in the neighborhood of the capital, he met five sailors, who were being driven to the city. One of them, weary and footsore, limped after the rest, unable to keep pace with them. The prince took off his own shoes or sandals and put them upon the feet of the captive. He provided them all with food, and notified Mr. Laborde of their approach. He bought them all upon their arrival, gave them money and letters of recommendation, and sent them back to their own country. At another time, when Rakoto beheld a captive driven and beaten, and dragging himself painfully along the dreadful road, he alighted from his palanquin, and gave the sufferer his own place.

In the same manner he clothed the naked, gave food to the hungry, and opened the prison-doors to many a one condemned to die. He would unhesitatingly give his last dollar, when needed;

distribute rice and provisions to the half-starved creatures who labored for the government unpaid; and when any one was in danger of death, a message to the prince soon brought him to unbind the cords, and bid the victim fly. He made it known that he would receive petitions at all hours, and forbade a slave ever to turn away an applicant, even at midnight. If he pleaded in vain with his mother for the pardon of prisoners, he assumed the risk himself, and found means for their escape. Was ever a mother so teased with a good son? In order to elude his watchful mercy, she often hastened the sentence of death, or took the opportunity of his absence to quickly execute a waiting criminal.

Although the champion of the Christians, Rakoto's kind acts were not by any means confined to them. Wherever he beheld suffering he was ready to relieve it, and whenever he detected an act of injustice, he fearlessly condemned it, even in his royal mother. He was therefore universally beloved by the people. They regarded him as Peter did the angel who opened his prison-doors.

The diviners, the idol-keepers, and all their supporters in the government, hated him as heartily as the people loved him, and there were not wanting ambitious plotters who desired a very differ-

ent successor to their incomparable queen. He had a rival in the person of a cousin, who, before his birth, had been adopted by the queen and regarded as her heir. He was not as humane as Rakoto, nor as cruel as Ranavalona. Having an influential position in the government, it would not be a difficult matter to take a step higher, when the queen was obliged to yield her honors. The heathen party would gladly have called him their future king.

Rakoto's daily interference in their blood-thirsty rule did not suit the temper of this party. They detested his reproachful eyes; loving darkness, they desired not only to put out the lamp that guided his feet, and exposed their evil deeds; but longed for the opportunity to destroy him. To guard against such treachery, a number of friends banded together for his protection, and bound themselves by an oath. These all lived near him, and a few were in constant attendance. When he consented to this plan, he said to them, "Our great object must be to lessen the sufferings of the people, to prevent unjust accusations, and undeserved and excessive punishment; to restore, if possible, those sentenced to death, and to do all we can to save the lives of the people. God will help us, for it is right to do it, and God will protect us.

We must study the customs, the feelings, and the habits of the people, that, while we try to do good, we may not be entrapped and put to death. We must not make any boast or stir about what we are doing. Let the people find out what our motives are by our doings. We must always do good — all kinds of good." With this body-guard, the prince went by night or day, in storm and darkness, to rescue the condemned. Nothing, whatever, deterred him.

Notwithstanding all precautions for his safety, he was once nearly sacrificed. An idol-keeper and some adherents concealed themselves in the way by which the prince was to pass in making a visit to one of the chief officers who was ill. As the spear was raised for a deadly thrust, the prince caught it and saved himself the blow. His attendants would have destroyed the waylayers on the spot but for his interference, and the officer, whose illness had given the opportunity, ordered the assassin to be put to death that night. But the prince would not permit it.

"God is the sovereign of life," said he. "He has preserved my life, and it is not necessary for its continued preservation that I should destroy the life of this man. Let him live, but be sent to

a distant part of the country, and there so secured as to prevent further mischief to me or others."

Finding the prince too well protected both by the queen and by the people, and fearing the displeasure too of the doting mother, Rakoto's enemies could only vent their ill-will upon the Christians. It was impossible to bring against them any accusation except for their religion. Their conduct was irreproachable. On account of oppression the starving people were often driven to stealing food, but in no case was one of the Christians in fault. They were so trustworthy in the care of property, so truthful, so humble, and obedient to the hardest requirements, that the most exacting were constrained to say of them, "These people would be good servants, indeed, but for their praying." When brought before the judges for this, they acknowledged that "they prayed for their sovereign, her officers, for the good of the kingdom, and the prosperity and happiness of the people." One of the judges declared they had done no harm, and convicted them only because it was against the law of the queen to pray and read.

Sometimes their accusers were spies employed to track them out by the government, and sometimes members of their own families, to whom they had spoken in the fullness of their yearnings

for the souls of those dear to them. The first announcement to them of accusation was the planting of a broad-headed silver spear before the door, after which none dared to leave the house till ordered to do so. When brought before the officers appointed to examine them, they were questioned, and, often without either witnesses or accusers, pleaded guilty and met death rather than yield one jot of their faith. Neither could any favor of the queen buy their allegiance from the Saviour. "Fear God and honor the king," was their reply to such proposals, and their past conduct offered proofs that they could serve their earthly sovereign all the more faithfully because of their obedience to the Eternal King.

To one such, when condemned to die, the queen sent a messenger offering not only life, but high favor and reward if he would renounce his religion and serve her. He "thanked her, but declared he could not forsake Christ," and added, "Yet I can serve the queen."

An account, written by survivors, is given of one group of condemned Christians in the fierce persecution of 1849. Eight were brought one day before the officers.

"Do you pray to the sun or the moon or the earth?" they asked.

"I do not pray to these, for the hand of God made them," answered one for the rest.

"Do you pray to the twelve mountains that are sacred?"

"I do not pray to them, for they are mountains."

"Do you pray to the idols that render sacred the kings?"

"I do not pray to them, for the hand of man made them."

"Do you pray to the ancestors of the sovereigns?"

"Kings and rulers are given by God that we should serve and obey them and render them homage. Nevertheless, they are only men like ourselves; when we pray, we pray to God alone."

"You make distinct and observe the Sabbath day," continued the officers.

"That is the day of the great God," replied the Christian; "for in six days the Lord made all his works. But God rested on the seventh, and he caused it to be holy; and I rest, or keep sacred that day."

All testified to holding the same opinions; and one, who had kept aloof, seeing their steadfastness came forward also, lest he should by silence deny his God. Another, whose wife was among the ac-

cused and who had heard her confession, came and said to her, "Be not afraid, for it is well if for that you die."

"He was a soldier from a distance, and not of the number accused. Then he was examined, and, as he made the same avowal, they bound him also. And they removed these ten brethren and sisters and made their bands hard or tight, and confined them each in a separate house."

According to the journal, others were added to those in prison till they numbered nineteen. One had said, "'Jehovah is God alone, and above every name that is named, and Jesus Christ is also God.' Hearing this the people cried out, mocking."

"'Rabodampoimerina (the sacred name of the queen) is our God but not your God,'" said an officer to another.

"'The God who made me is my God,' answered the Christian, 'but Rabodo is my queen or sovereign.' And when he refused other answer they said, 'Perhaps he is an idiot or a lunatic.' He answered, 'I am not an idiot and have not lost my understanding.' Then there was a commotion and buzz among the people, saying, 'Take him away.' And they took him to prison."

So these nineteen, having remained faithful in

their testimony, were condemned by Ranavalona to the martyr's death. Of the nineteen, four were nobles, two of them husband and wife. As it is counted unlawful to shed the blood of nobles, these were sentenced to be burned alive. They endeavored to have this cruel sentence commuted into one of strangling before their bodies should be burnt; but Ranavalona was inexorable. Their terrible privilege of nobility she was determined to accord. The other fifteen were sentenced to be thrown from the summit of a rock.

On the day appointed, multitudes thronged to each of the two places of martyrdom. Those condemned to be thrown from the rock were first wrapped in mats; mats were forced into their mouths to prevent their speaking, and they were then tied by the hands and put to poles, and in this painful and ignominious attitude were carried to execution. Notwithstanding the gags, however, they persisted in exhorting the people as they were carried along; and some who saw them said that "their faces were as the faces of angels."

Thus they reached Arapimarinana. This is the place of execution; a rock one hundred and fifty feet high, in the midst of the city, — the Tarpeian rock of Tananarivo. A rope was then tied around the body of each, and one by one they were

lowered a little way over the precipice. Then, while the executioner was standing with his knife in his hand ready to sever the strands that kept them from eternity, the officer in charge, for the last time asked, "Will you obey the queen's command?" One answer came from all; an emphatic "No." The executioner then cut the ropes, and one after another the martyrs' bodies lay crushed and bleeding on the rocks below.

One of the fifteen was saved. She was a young woman, very beautiful and accomplished, and very much liked by the queen, who wished if possible to save her. Hoping that the sight of her companions' deaths would terrify her out of her obstinacy, they had reserved her to the last. They then asked her if she would not think better of her folly. "No," she answered; "let me go with my friends." Whereupon, the executioner roughly said, "She is an idiot; she has lost her wits. Take her away." She was sent to a distant part of the country where she married a Christian man, and a few years after died, doubtless in the faith.

But let us now turn to the spot where the four Christian nobles are about to undergo the cruel deaths to which their rank condemned them.

A village called Faravohitra, situated on the same hill with Tananarivo, and in full view from

MARTYRDOM OF THE CHRISTIANS.

a great part of the city. Here four stakes were firmly fixed in the earth, and a crowd gathered around, eagerly watching the preparations for the execution, and awaiting the arrival of the condemned. As the rank of these forbade subjecting them to the same indignities which the others had suffered, they were permitted to walk to the place of execution. The same faith which supported their humbler brethren, sustained them. Even the Christian lady, who had peculiar reasons for dreading the trial, beheld it with unfaltering fortitude. As they went along they comforted themselves by singing a hymn which begins with, —

"When our hearts are troubled,"

and each verse of which ends with, —

"Then remember me."

They reached the place, gazed calmly upon the preparations for their death, and were fastened to the stakes. Just then a bright rainbow arched the heavens, one end of which appeared to rest almost upon the spot where they were to suffer. The pile was kindled; and then, from amidst the crackling and roaring of the fire, came forth not the sounds of pain, but those of praise. That scene, and the hymn which the martyrs sung as they rose in their fiery chariot to heaven, will never be for-

gotten in Madagascar. To the sounds of praise succeeded those of prayer. "O Lord," they were heard to pray, "receive our spirits; for thy love to us has caused this to come to us, and lay not this sin to their charge."

"Thus," writes a witness of that wonderful and memorable scene, "they prayed, as long as they had any life. Then they died; but softly, gently. Indeed, gentle was the going forth of their life, and astonished were all the people around that beheld them there."

After all was over, the dead bodies of those who had been hurled from the rock of Arapimarinana were, by order of the queen, dragged with ropes to the place where the four nobles had suffered. Fresh fuel was heaped on, till their bodies, too, were consumed. Thus though the martyrs were divided in their deaths, according to the difference of worldly rank, their ashes were commingled, even as their souls alike ascended, stripped of the petty distinctions of earth, to their common Saviour, who had made them all alike, "kings and priests to God and his Father."

Mr. Ellis, who visited the scenes of martyrdom a number of years after, thus speaks: "When I visited the place in company with the bishop of Mauritius, we stood and gazed on the prisons in

the distance in which the sufferers had been confined, on the place where their sentences were read over to them, and where, as they sat together on the ground, bound with chains, and encircled by soldiers, they sang their hymn of praise to Christ. We passed up the road along which, surrounded by an excited crowd, they raised their voices in prayer that God would remember them. We stood by the side of the spot; the place itself we felt to be holy ground, on which, when fastened to the stake, they sang, —

'There is a blessed land,
Making most happy;
Never thence shall rest depart,
Nor cause of sorrow come.'

"Our companions, most of whom had been spectators on that eventful day, and one, the mother of a martyr, pointed out where the soldiers and the heathens stood around and cried, 'Where is your Jehovah now? Why does he not come and take you away?' To which, from the midst of the flames, the martyrs answered, 'Jehovah is here; he is taking us to a better place.' Our companions also showed us the part of the road, a little distant, on which the relatives and associates of the Christians stood, waving their last adieus to their rejoicing friends,

who smiled, and lifted up as far as they could their scorched hands, or burning fragments of dress, to return the salutations. In perfect accordance with this account are the spirit and feeling manifested by survivors when recounting their sufferings. I have sometimes sat as if enchained to the lips of the venerable widow or sister of a martyr, as she has recounted with simple pathos the sufferings she has endured, and been overcome with admiration at the marvelous power of 'the love of Christ shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them.' The Christians especially rejoice in the proposal to raise, as a perpetual memorial of these events, a church consecrated to the worship of the martyrs' God and Saviour."

In another letter, Mr. Ellis adds, "The deep emotion with which the pastors and others spoke on this topic was most affecting. Some they said had lost fathers, others children, some wives, others husbands, or brothers, or sisters, whom they now rejoiced to think of as with the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven; but whom they and their fellow-Christians would never forget. If churches, they said, were built upon the spots on which they had suffered and died for the love of Christ, it would not only comfort surviving friends, but do

much to perpetuate the impressions which their constancy had produced on the minds both of Christians and heathens."

These eighteen alone suffered death; but during this last great outbreak of persecuting rage, many more underwent punishments of various degrees on account of their faith. Mr. Ellis says, "Of the numbers implicated, some idea may be formed from the fact that at one time and place thirty-seven who had explained or preached the Word were reduced to slavery, with their wives and children; forty-two who had possessed books were made slaves, and their property seized; twenty-seven who had possessed books, and who had preached or explained, were made slaves, with their wives and children; six, with whom it was a second offense, were imprisoned, and eighteen were put to death." Besides these, two thousand and fifty-five were fined one dollar each, more as a mark of disgrace, probably, than as a punishment. Officers in the army, and even nobles, were degraded from their rank, loaded with heavy chains, and set to sweep the streets of the capital, or toil in the unaccustomed labor of felling trees in the forests, or dragging stone from the quarries. The following letter from one of them is addressed to

the widow of Mr. Johns. It is dated Tananarivo, November 6th, 1861: —

"Beloved Mother: — When I lay hold on this paper, pen, and ink, to write to you, my heart and all within me is moved. I have much to say to you. I wish to tell you of the sorrows that have befallen us. Very great was the persecution which drove us into the wilderness. They sought to put me to death. I was accused of praying to the ancestors of the English, and also of teaching the people to do so. They sent officers, and many besides, to take me up, and they took all the people they found in my house, and my wife Rabodo also. My children, servants, and every thing I had, they took away as a forfeit to the queen. They bound my wife, Rabodo, and flogged her from morning to night to make her tell who were her companions. She fainted, and they left her to recover a little, and then flogged her again. But she refused to give up the names of any, so that they were astonished, and said, '*She is a Christian, indeed.*' Failing to get her to tell who were her associates, they put a heavy iron ring round her neck and round each ankle. They also fastened these rings together by heavy iron chains from the neck to the ankles, and then bound her to four more Christians. Five others were also

bound together, and there was a third party of sixteen also bound together. Every Sabbath day for seven months, they placed these three parties before the people, that they might see how they were punished for keeping holy the Lord's day. At the end of the seven months they separated them, and sent five to the east. Of these two died, and three still remain. The other party of five they sent to the north. Of these, four died, and only one remains; and the sixteen they sent to the west. Of these five died and eleven remain. My wife Rabodo was among those they sent to the west. She was left in bonds, and died on the 4th of March, 1859. Yes; she died in her chains.* Her works follow her. They pursued me for four years and three months, seeking to put me to death. They issued a proclamation to search for me in every village for six months, and they sent papers in all directions, and a paper called a Gazette, ordering the search for me. But the Lord watched over the afflicted, and will not give the enemy to rejoice over them. My children they have sold into slavery, and my property they have taken, so that I now have no house to dwell in, or land to live upon. What has befallen me is too hard for nature; but precious are the riches in

Christ, and in him light are the sorrows of the earth. 2 Cor. iv. 17; v. 6-8."

This simple record, giving the naked facts of suffering, by one evidently unskilled to describe the feelings awakened by them, is merely a specimen of what very many more could have told.

Yet here, as of old, "the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church." It was impossible even for hardened natures to witness the courage of such sufferers, without being convinced of the forgiving spirit and the unwavering faith, the truth and power of their religion. Their own gods could not sustain them in death. Every one knew that in his own heart. The thoughtful saw clearly that his neighbor's foot was planted on a rock, and his own wandered in an uncertain way that made him shudder. The Holy Spirit was shedding his sweet influence amid the frightful scenes, and drawing many a one to embrace the faith that is in Jesus, even when they knew the narrow way was walled with terrors. Like those who had died, they obtained leaves of the Scriptures when they dared not carry a volume, and thus sought the truth for themselves. Admitted to the secret midnight gatherings, they could receive baptism and partake of the sacrament, praise

and pray and read, taking for their model the church of the New Testament. Although hunted and persecuted, the church grew in numbers rather than diminished, and the more its enemies strove to crush it, the brighter its light shone. It was already in the sight of all Madagascar as "a city set upon a hill that could not be hid."

CHAPTER IX.

VISIT OF REV. MR. ELLIS.

News from Madagascar — Arrival of the Missionaries at Tamatave in 1853 — Eagerly Welcomed — The Fragment of the Psalms — Refused Permission to go to the Capital — Permission granted in 1856 — Reception there — Audience with the Queen — Welcomed by Prince Rakoto — Mr. Lambert — Designs of the Catholics — The Prince's Conversations with Mr. Ellis — Excursions — The Queen's Dinner — Exhibition of Philosophical Instruments — Thirst for Knowledge — Influence of Mr. Ellis's Visit — His Dismissal by the Queen, and Departure.

In 1852, rumors reached England of a willingness on the part of the queen of Madagascar to reopen intercourse with other nations. The Rev. Mr. Ellis was sent to ascertain the fact. In company with Mr. Cameron, who had been one of the missionary band at Tananarivo, he reached the port of Tamatave in the following year, and awaited there the result of a letter to the queen, requesting her permission to proceed to the capital. Sixteen years had passed since such an embassy had touched at the island. The news spread quickly, and as many as dared pressed to welcome the world in the persons of these venturesome visitors. Some came from curiosity, some to talk of the hope of reopening trade, others to ask for

books, secretly longing for copies of the Bible, while they confessed that "books with the words arranged in lines were prohibited; but that books with the words arranged in columns" — spelling-books — were allowed to be received. Their disappointment was so great at not being able to obtain either that some even shed tears. It seemed a relief to unburden their hearts, to receive sympathy and advice, and to send messages of what God had wrought for them, to the Christians of other lands. A native chief announced himself a scholar of the missionaries, made many inquiries about them, and not daring in the presence of others to express himself more freely, signified his steadfast love for Christ by pressing the hand of the Christian stranger, and fervently asking God's blessing upon him. Of another, Mr. Ellis says, "After looking earnestly a few moments, and almost mechanically giving us his hand, there came over his whole countenance such an expression as I had never before witnessed in any human being. It was not ecstasy, it was not terror, and yet an apparent blending of both, marked by an intensity of feeling but rarely seen. During the whole interview, which was long, there was a strange uneasiness mingled with evident satisfaction, difficult to describe."

Two men, who had traveled one hundred miles out of their way to find Mr. Ellis, came one evening to ask for a copy of the Bible. They acknowledged that they already possessed "some of the words of David," and when requested to produce them, looked at each other in alarm. After some persuasion, one drew forth a parcel from the folds of his lamba. He carefully unrolled one piece of cloth after another, and finally disclosed a few worn, dingy leaves of the Book of Psalms. These sacred fragments had been read by many, and passed from one to another with the greatest care and caution. Anxious to secure the relic, Mr. Ellis offered him a new and entire copy of the Scriptures in exchange. After ascertaining that the same "words of David" were in the new book in addition to the words of Jesus, of Paul, Peter, and John, the man joyfully gave up his worn treasure, and concealing his new one, went hastily from the house. The two men could not be found the next morning, having departed immediately on their journey, lest some misfortune should rob them of their great riches.

After fifteen days of hazardous interchange of friendship, letters arrived from the queen excusing herself from receiving the visitors on account of pressing business, and politely recommending

them "to return across the water." Greater severity than this had been expected, and the governor of Tamatave told them to take courage, and intimated the probable reason of their dismissal to be the non-payment of a certain sum, which was required on condition of opening the ports. The gentlemen returned to Mauritius, where the amount — fifteen thousand dollars — was immediately raised among the merchants, and committed to Mr. Cameron, who returned to Madagascar. His mission was successful. Trade was opened, and once more it was possible to obtain access to the capital. Mr. Ellis applied for permission to visit it, but was denied because his second application was not made, like his first, in company with Mr. Cameron.

It was not till 1856 that his admission to the island was finally negotiated. He was then employed by the London Missionary Society to ascertain, as far as possible, the state of the Christians, and with this intention reached Tamatave in May of that year. The influence of trade was already visible in the prosperity of the town. A number of new houses had been built, others were going up, and a new hotel, the first in the island, had been opened.

Mr. Ellis received a cordial welcome. As be-

fore, many applicants pressed him for books. Letters of welcome reached him from the prince, and a guide was sent to conduct him to Tananarivo. During all the journey, he was met by natives, who came forward to greet him and to tell him of their sufferings for Christ's sake. They often sat together till midnight recounting the terrible scenes through which they or their friends had passed, but always with a humble spirit, accepting the chastenings of Providence. "They seemed," says Mr. Ellis, "to regard their sufferings as permitted by God, and spoke of it as a cause for exercising confidence in the Most High." Neither did they cherish the slightest feeling of revenge toward their persecutors. Their comments were touchingly childlike and submissive, and frequently all wept together at the recital of what each had endured.

Letters from the queen also reached the guest on his journey, and when within a few miles of the capital, he was requested to wait her further pleasure, which was of course the pleasure of the sikidy, as to the day and hour of reception. He was at length escorted into the city by appointed officers and in a palanquin courteously sent by the prince. The house provided for him was of two stories, the lower containing two rooms neatly carpeted with

mats, the walls lined with mats, and the window of one screened by a white muslin curtain or blind. A bedstead spread with mats and curtained with white, added to the aspect of neatness, and a table with a water-jug and wine-glasses arranged upon it, a looking-glass above it, and both rooms furnished with chairs, altogether afforded proof that the missionaries had not labored in vain to civilize as well as to instruct this people.

A few days after his arrival, Mr. Ellis was informed that the queen had appointed an audience. The officer who was to conduct him to her presence was anxious concerning the court-dress in which the new-comer was to appear, and perceiving in his wardrobe a purple and green dressing-gown lined with scarlet, assured him it was a most imposing garment, and requested him to arrange the wearing of it so as to display the brilliant lining, which happened to be the royal color. Thus equipped, Mr. Ellis arrived before the palace gate in his palanquin. The white balcony of the high-roofed palace was already occupied by the court. In the midst, upon a raised throne of green, sat queen Ranavolona, with the ever-present umbrella, embroidered with gold, over her head, not to screen her from the sun, but as an emblem of roy-

alty. Although nearly seventy, she seemed in vigorous health. A golden crown and a white satin lamba with sprigs of gold, distinguished, if it did not become her. Prince Rakoto stood at her left, wearing a star and a coronet of green velvet bordered with a band and leaves of silver, and near him his cousin in a cap of black and gold. The princess Rabodo, wife of Rakoto, sat on the right of the queen, with a small, plain, scarlet umbrella over her head.

The court-yard below was occupied by soldiers and officers, leaving an open central space for the stranger who was to be presented to the queen, and for the interpreters. Into this space, Mr. Ellis advanced, and, after presenting the usual offering of homage in the shape of a silver dollar to one of the officers, bowed and shouted his acknowledgments to the sovereign in the balcony above. No nearer than this was the profane foot of a foreigner ever allowed to approach. Neither did her majesty utter a word. An orator near her returned the compliments of the visitor, and assured him of the desire of the queen for friendly intercourse with all foreign nations. When the interview was finished, he was required to bow to the east and to the tomb of Radama, and was remind-

'ed not on any account to place the left foot first over the threshold on retiring from the palace gate.

Prince Rakoto, in his love for the English, had hastened to see Mr. Ellis on the first day of his arrival. He spoke with much interest and warmth of the visit of a Mr. Lambert, a French gentleman, the previous year. The cruelties of the queen had awakened in him a desire for interference in behalf of her subjects, by either the English or French nation. Prince Rakoto had assured him that "he cared not who ruled over the nation, so long as the government was good and just," and had entered into a private treaty with Mr. Lambert, which enabled the latter to confer with foreign governments for the relief of Madagascar. In all this, the prince meditated no disrespect to his mother, except the placing it out of her power to inflict continued horrors upon her people. He repeatedly said that he would risk his own life to save hers, and that he would be the first to resent any attempt upon her life or her dignity. But both England and France had declined interference, and Mr. Lambert's proposal remained a profound secret in Madagascar.

Prince Rakoto had become strongly attached to this Mr. Lambert, during his short stay, and, in

proof of it, gave him his only son, a boy of six years. Mr. Lambert adopted the child, to gratify the prince, but did not assume any of the responsibilities of adoption, leaving him with his mother, a favorite slave of the prince. This is one of the complimentary customs of Madagascar. That Prince Rakoto did not wholly understand the Christian religion is evident from the fact that, like his countrymen, he was not faithful to one wife. The boy was the son of a slave named Mary, to whom the prince was deeply attached, and who was presented to strangers in company with the Princess Rabodo, with the same respect that would be paid to one of twelve wives. She is described as exceedingly plain.

Through the influence of a Catholic priest, residing at the house of Mr. Laborde, the princess wore a crucifix, and the prince a medal, on one side of which was the letter M., with the cross interwoven, and surrounded by stars; on the other side was a figure of the virgin in relief, standing with outstretched arms; and around the figure was an appeal to her prayers in their behalf for an heir. This priest attempted to make good Roman Catholics of the future sovereigns; but by the prince's own confession, he succeeded no better than his brethren in the Isle of Bourbon who en-

deavored to convert some refugees. These stated in a letter to friends that, "It seemed as if the Pope stood (in authority) in the place of God, and that the priest forgave sins. And as to the images, etc., before which they prostrated themselves, it was like the sampy, or idols of our own country." And yet it is possible, if prince Rakoto's desire for an heir had been fulfilled, he might have learned to put his trust in the intercessions of the virgin. He was certainly influenced strongly by those who once gained his confidence; whether it was a French priest, a French philanthropist, or an English missionary.

In his conversations with Mr. Ellis, the prince often expressed his admiration and esteem for the English. "The character of their laws, especially in relation to human life," he said, impressed him strongly, and he desired to imitate them when it was in his power to control the government. From all that he had heard, he believed them to be "such as in his own heart he should like to be, — true, just, humane, and watchful over human life." In speaking of the Crimean War, which had just closed, he remarked that, when opposition ceased, slaughter ceased; and compared it with the bloody history of the wars of his own country, which never ceased till the offenders were massa-

cred; even though they yielded all the conquorer required. Both himself and the princess Rabodo, who came with him to converse with Mr. Ellis, lamented the afflicted condition of his country.

"What can we do to promote the prosperity and stability of the nation, that Madagascar may become like other nations?" asked the prince.

"Prosperity can not be provided for you by others; it must be your own achievement, if you possess it," replied Mr. Ellis.

"How can we attain it?" persisted Rakoto.

"With the blessing of God, you may attain it by intelligence, integrity, and justice, energy, and self-reliance," was the answer.

The prince lamented his own ignorance. He could not read. His adviser urged him to apply himself at once to the overcoming of this difficulty. "Seek to enlighten the people; promote education to the utmost; promote industry. Let your laws be just."

"But suppose we try to do this and the nation does not prosper, — will they not say the government is to blame?" asked the prince.

"There are people who are always ready to blame the government when they do not prosper," was the answer. "But if your laws are just and wise, and those who administer them honest, the

enlightened and upright will be ready to support you even in adversity. The loyalty of the people depends much upon the officers who administer as well as the sovereign who makes laws; and one of the wisest of kings has said, 'A wicked person shall not stand before me.'"

"I know that; I am quite convinced of that," was the earnest reply. "How does Queen Victoria secure the best welfare of her people? How can I make my subjects happy and upright? How can I expel evil from my kingdom and put good in its place?" Such were the longing appeals from this prince, who already felt the burden of his wicked nation upon his heart. He reached out his entreating hands to his civilized brothers to help him bear the weight. Oh that he could have gone to the Fountain of all knowledge, and learned how to govern his people, and that he could have asked strength and guidance and wisdom from the only source which could avail in his utmost need! Here was Rakoto's fault. The impulses of his own heart often bore him powerfully toward good, but, unsupported by divine grace, they were fitful and transient; no more to be depended on than the streams in the desert.

Both the prince and princess endeavored to show their friendship for their English visitor, by

arranging excursions which enabled him both to see points of interest in the neighborhood, and to confer with Christians whom he might not otherwise meet. They came one day to convey him to the cottage which had been the favorite country resort of Radama. The princess was in an open palanquin of scarlet cloth lined with pink satin, and an attendant held a pink silk umbrella over her head. Her dress was European on the occasion, though spoiled by a heathenish mixture of colors. The dress was blue, trimmed with scarlet velvet and gilt buttons, and her bonnet of pink satin. The accompanying ladies were equally gay in their toilets, and the officers appeared in blue and scarlet, with white lambas bordered with brilliant stripes.

The inhabitants of the villages through which they passed, brought gifts of sugar-cane, manioc roots, or sweet potatoes, all freshly gathered from their gardens, and offered as first-fruits in token of homage. Their love for their future king was manifest at every step, and the procession was accompanied by so great a crowd that it was difficult to move along. At the cottage, Mr. Ellis was entertained with native music and dancing, and a collation of fruits and sweetmeats served on silver plates. On their return, they visited two or three

encampments of soldiers outside the city, and the prince took pains to point out the graves of the missionaries who had died in Tananarivo, and the houses in which they lived. The rock from which so many Christians had been thrown, and where others were still to perish, was also in plain sight as they wound through the plain and up the hill.

The queen was not to be outdone in hospitality by her son. Accordingly, Mr. Ellis was invited to dine; not in the palace, for this was an unknown honor, nor with the queen, for this also would infringe upon her dignity, but in the house of the widow of one of the wealthiest of the Malagasy nobles. As the services of the people belonged to the queen when she chose to demand them, so also did the property, the plate, and the viands of those who surrounded her in the palace. Mr. Ellis was therefore invited by the queen to dine at the house of "Lady Rasoaray." The house was spacious, the walls papered, and the floors covered with pretty mats. The guests, among whom was Mr. Laborde and the priest, were seated at a table spread with an elegance that one could hardly look for in Madagascar. The covered dishes, spoons, and forks were all of silver, with the crest of the Hovahs, a crown and a bird engraved upon them. Silver vases also ornamented the table. They were of

handsome pattern, and, like the plate, were of native manufacture. The dinner consisted of thirty or more courses, and offered a variety and excellence that would have done credit to Paris. A limited quantity of wine, some speech-making and a few toasts, ending with the usual one to the queen, followed the dessert, and the party broke up.

In the court-yard of the palace the queen also gave an entertainment, which she seemed to accord always to strangers whom she wished to honor. It was a kind of moving tableau, consisting of a variety of Moorish and native dances, executed by ladies and nobles in fancy costumes of silk, satin, velvet, and ostrich feathers, as profuse as in the fancy-balls of wealthier courts. The queen, royal family, and attendants, who occupied the balcony, appeared in Arab costume. The singular dresses, the swarthy faces, the silence of the dancers, the lofty palace, so peculiar in its structure, the proud and savage queen, sitting in gaudy state in the long, white veranda, far above the heads of the people, as if ever to remind them that her feet were upon their necks, and over it all the shining of the noon-day sun, offered a strange picture to European eyes, even if the actors were unknown. But stranger yet was the

grouping of characters; for to the mind's eye the queen's robes were dyed in the blood of martyrs, and she sat as a crouching tigress, with her loved and loving son at her side, mournfully conscious of her cruel faults, and yearning for something higher and truer than he was able to grasp. There was the amiable Rabodo, and the intriguing ministers, also, glancing among the people for victims before whom they could plant the silver spear; and mingling with them, the noble Prince Ramonja, the mentor of Rakoto, but who openly avowed himself a champion of the cross, and who, for Christ's sake, had suffered the spoiling of his goods and the loss of his honors. And there, in the court-yard below, was the wily priest, planning convents and cathedrals for the descendants of those who glided to and fro before him; the generous Mr. Laborde in Turkish robes, in turban and pointed slippers, looking with pride upon the luxurious display; and the bewildered English missionary, transfixed by the weird scene, yet feeling keenly that though costly silks floated lightly about the dancers now, at the queen's pleasure the same invincible will might any day bind them with chains, and leave them to drag the heavy weight "till they bowed the head as wasting weeds."

If the queen was quick to adopt the luxuries

and amusements of civilization, she was not so easily persuaded to accept the novel arts. It had been proposed to her by Mr. Laborde to establish a telegraph between the capital and coast; but she replied that "messengers by relays of runners were quite quick enough for her." Some of the chiefs were, however, greatly interested in the instrument brought by Mr. Ellis. It excited not curiosity merely, but intelligent inquiry. He says, "They seemed to comprehend and rejoice in the perception of the simple mode of representing letters by motions of the needles; but what the power was which traveled so instantaneously and imperceptibly along the wire, they could neither comprehend nor imagine. It was not the blank unquestioning wonder of stolid ignorance, satisfied that the facts were beyond immediate comprehension and therefore supernatural, which they manifested; but the intense interest of thinking men, who seemed to feel that they had acquired a new mental treasure, though they yet only half understood the wonders before them."

Photography excited equal delight and astonishment among all classes of the people. The fidelity and quickness with which every defect, as well as every good feature was transferred, afforded amusing comment to some, and the wonderful

part which the sun took in the picture-making was to others a matter of sober questioning and deep thought. A few regarded it with superstitious feeling, calling it *zanahary*, — meaning supernatural. Vanity was amusingly displayed by some. A chief, when he learned that his picture might be taken, secretly withdrew, and presently returned in breathless haste, accompanied by a slave bearing a bundle. From this he selected a scarlet lamba and other gay apparel, and adjusting it satisfactorily upon his person, sat for his portrait. He was severely disappointed at not finding the color of his favorite lamba represented. No amateur photographer was ever so besieged with sitters as was Mr. Ellis; but it enabled him to secure pictures of all classes of the people, from the prince, nobles, and chiefs, to the poor Hovah slave with her infant bound upon her back.

Among those who came to his house were many young men, who seemed drawn, not by mere curiosity, but by a strong desire to acquire knowledge. The most of them knew how to read and write, for many parents had taken pains to teach their children the little they had learned. At the time the missionaries left, four thousand persons who could write were employed by the government alone; so that although there were no longer any

schools, it was necessary as well as possible for these acquirements to be transmitted in some degree to the children. This slight taste of knowledge, and the new intercourse with Europeans, seemed to awaken the minds of the youth for further attainments. In illustration, Mr. Ellis says, "On my first arrival, I had suspended a thermometer in my sitting-room; but so many young chiefs had noticed it when they came, and not satisfied with being told that it exhibited the temperature of the atmosphere, asked so many questions about the properties of the mercury, the causes of the variations in the temperature of the atmosphere, and the manner in which one affected the other, that I began to fear that I should be obliged to remove it for want of time to answer all the questions it suggested to their minds."

Mr. Ellis's intercourse with the people was full of interest. Though he remained but a few weeks at the capital, it must have served to awaken new thoughts in the minds of many, to inspire the hearts of those who held their country dear with new hopes, and to give a degree of comfort and support to the Christians who conferred with him far into the still night, that can hardly be understood, unless we remember at what risks it was obtained. He would gladly have remained longer;

but the inexorable sovereign fixed the day of his departure, and no entreaties could change it. Possibly the sikidy discovered to her the solace he was affording to the hunted and broken-hearted people.

Prince Rakoto and the princess Rabodo spent the last evening with Mr. Ellis. The prince spoke of the cruelties still practiced against the Christians, and said it was like tearing out his heart to witness them. He evidently suffered much distress of mind on that account, and acknowledged that his friends cautioned him of his own danger, and desired him to be accompanied by a larger number of attendants. "But," said he, "I put my trust in God. If it be his will that I should live, he will protect me."

Mr. Ellis assured him that God requires us to use means for self-protection.

"I do not think," was the reply, "I should in reality be more safe with a larger number of attendants. My chief trust is in God. He is the Sovereign of life."

The next day he accompanied Mr. Ellis a few miles on his journey. A little way from the capital they passed a poor native, who was playing upon an instrument, and begging food of the passers-by. He wore a heavy iron ring about his

neck, and another around his leg. The other leg was bruised and torn as if a similar ring had injured it. His crime, the prince said, was slight. "Don't look that way. I am ashamed. It is barbarous!" he exclaimed, in passing.

At a little village five miles from the capital, he commended his guest to the protection of God, and left him. He was pained at parting with his new found friend; and no wonder, since with him went his present hope of a speedy relief from such proofs of his mother's barbarous rule. He must have returned to the capital with a heavy burdened heart, to wait and long for the coming either of enlightened helpers from another land, or for death to take the scepter from the hard grasp of the cruel queen. Alas, that with so much amiableness there should have been so little of sound wisdom or steady purpose!

CHAPTER X.

CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE QUEEN.

Return of Mr. Lambert, with Madame Pfeiffer — Their Reception — Dinner of the Queen — Military Review — Madame Pfeiffer's Pianoforte Concert — Plotting of a Conspiracy at the House of Mr. Laborde — Madame Pfeiffer implicated — The Plot disclosed — The Prince detained in the Palace — Odium of the Conspiracy thrown upon the Christians — Fresh Persecutions — Flight of the Accused — Illness of Mr. Laborde — Cruelties inflicted on the People — Decree of Banishment against the Europeans — Their Escort to the Coast — Terrible Sufferings — Escape to Mauritius — Four Years of Persecution — Letter of a native Pastor.

PRICNE Rakoto had not long to wait to welcome the return of a much beloved friend. In less than a year after he had bidden farewell to Mr. Ellis, and all present hope of relief for his enslaved country, he was once more cheered by the coming of Mr. Lambert. In company with the latter was a distinguished lady traveler, who flings the vail from Madagascar with a free hand, and gives us a clearer picture of the Christians than we could catch from its cautious uplifting by Mr. Ellis. Having traversed lonely deserts fearless of Arab robbers; faced Fiji cannibals in their own islands; having shared the crust with the lowly of all nations, as well as feasted in the palaces of the high-

born in all the continents of the earth, MADAME PFEIFFER, although in her sixtieth year, was well able to venture on the hardships of Madagascar swamps and forests, and to risk the dangers of a visit to a queen whom her experience pronounced the most cruel and cunning woman on the face of the earth. Coming alone to Tamatave, in a ship which had only accommodations for cattle, and being extremely plain in person, manner, and dress, she was received by the Malagasy with that indifference which any community feels toward an unknown and unprepossessing traveler. This absence of official attention gave her the opportunity of seeing the people in an every-day character, and learning the prevalence of intemperance, dishonesty, and licentiousness among them. At the same time, we have her unintentional testimony to the purity and faithfulness of the Christians, in beautiful contrast with the surging mass of wickedness, — a record the more valuable because of the difference of her own creed, and her bitter enmity toward all missionaries.

She remained several weeks at Tamatave, where she had occasion to test, and find wanting, the hospitality which the more honored visitor so frequently receives. But when Mr. Lambert joined her, she had no reason to lament a want of kind-

ness, and thenceforward every thing was at her service. Mr. Lambert had a large number of costly presents for the queen and her household; so that a great cavalcade of bearers and attendants wound among the lakes, through the lowlands, up the hills, over the valleys and plains to the mountain hights, and to the vale at the foot of the "city of a thousand towns." Rakoto was detained by the illness of the queen; but sent forward his "adherents," or body-guard, and his son, to welcome his friend, and as he believed, his deliverer.

The sikidy did not detain the travelers, though the merry little madam suspected that the curiosity of the queen to see the presents had strong influence with the oracle. She was greatly amused, too, at being obliged to stand half an hour before the city gate, guarded by soldiers with crossed muskets, who politely refused to let them pass till the queen had been informed of their arrival, although their approach had been announced three times before. The hospitable Mr. Laborde received the tired travelers in his own house. His son, a young man of twenty, lately from Paris, and two Catholic priests, who were known in Tananarivo only as tutor and physician, composed a household quite European, and was home-like in its surroundings.

They had hardly dined when a slave announced the approach of Prince Rakoto, who immediately appeared. In his joy he threw his arms around Mr. Lambert, and held him in affectionate embrace. The queen also complimented them by a remarkably early invitation to dine; strangers usually being permitted to wait a week or ten days before her haughty eyes would recognize them. The second day after their arrival, they were invited by her to a feast at the house of "Lady Rasoaray," and on the third were granted an audience at the palace, which was in all respects like that given Mr. Ellis; yet seen through a pair of vivacious eyes, and described by a somewhat sarcastic pen, it appears differently. They were ordered to stand in a row in the court-yard, below the balcony where the queen sat in state, and wait till the soldiers went through with various military evolutions, "ending with a very comic point of drill, which consisted in suddenly poking up the right foot as if stung by a tarantula." The queen dispensed with an orator on this occasion, and herself conversed over the balcony. She is described at this time as "of rather dark complexion, strong and sturdily built, and although already seventy-five years of age, is, to the misfortune of her poor country, still hale and of active mind."

Madame Pfeiffer was, with Mr. Lambert, entertained by a review of the city division of troops. The officers, she writes, "were mostly clothed in European garb, and looked ridiculous and comical enough. One wore a dress-coat, the tails of which reached almost to his heels; another had a coat of flowered chintz; a third, a faded red jacket, which had once done duty as part of a marine's uniform. Their hats were just as diverse in character. There were straw hats and felt hats of all sizes and shapes, caps and head-coverings of fearful and wonderful forms. The generals wore the regulation cocked hat of Europe, and were mounted." In this description, we understand the allusion of others to the fact that the Malagasy were too ready to adopt the showy superfluities of civilization, rather than that which was simply useful or in good taste. It is easy to ridicule this still barbarous people, but hardly just to forget that for twenty years they were pushed into civilized habits by an ambitious king, and then for twenty more years were pressed into degradation and ignorance by the iron hand of the queen.

The same fancy-ball which had astonished Mr. Ellis passed before Madame Pfeiffer's humorous criticism, and in her turn she gave a musical entertainment to the queen. Mr. Lambert had

brought a piano as a present the year of his previous visit, and, as the queen had never seen any one perform upon it, she requested Madame to give a private concert. This was acceded to with all the grace that the little Austrian traveler could command; for she hoped to be able thus to see the interior of the palace. For thirty years, she had not touched the piano; but, "forcing her stiff old fingers through a few scales and exercises, she contrived to remember a few easy, melodious waltzes and dance-tunes; and, thus prepared, ventured to risk the criticism of the royal connoisseur of Madagascar." Upon being introduced to the place of performance, she found it to be the court-yard, while the queen was perched in "the eternal balcony," and, after all her condescension, she was not to pass the sacred threshold of the palace. Submitting however to what could not be helped, she seated herself at the instrument. "What was my horror," she says, "on finding it so wofully out of tune that not a single note produced any thing like harmony with the rest; many of the keys, moreover, were so obstinate as to refuse to emit any sound whatever. I had to loosen them, lift them, press them down, and resort to all sorts of expedients to bring them into working order; and upon such an instrument as this I was to give my

grand concert! But true artistic greatness rises superior to all adverse circumstances; and inspired by the thought of exhibiting my talents to such an appreciating audience, I perpetrated the most wonderful runs over the whole key-board, thumped with all my might on the stubborn keys, and without any attempt at selection or sequence, played the first part of a waltz and the second of a march, in short any thing and every thing that came into my head." One hardly knows which is the most humorous, the daring performance of this intrepid woman, or the sober propriety with which the matchless medley was received by the court.

While Madame Pfeiffer and Queen Ranavalona were entertaining each other so quizzically, serious events were preparing in the house of Mr. Laborde. He frequently gave what seemed to be social entertainments in honor of his guests, at his own residence, and at the "garden-house" of his son, a little out of town; and these little parties invariably broke up with music, and the guests were accompanied through the streets to their homes, with drums, and other noisy instruments, in proof of gayety and enjoyment. Almost before she was aware of it, Madame Pfeiffer found herself involved in a conspiracy to remove Queen Ranavalona from the throne. All the Europeans, Prince Rakoto,

the commander-in-chief of the army, and many of the nobility and soldiers, were committed to the plan of effecting a sudden and bloodless revolution on a fixed night near at hand. The prince caused it to be expressly understood that his mother "was not to be deprived of her freedom, her wealth, or the honors which were her due;" and the change was to be undertaken solely for the relief of the nation, and not for his own ambition, as he cared little who reigned, if only the happiness of the people was secured. "For himself, he wished neither for the throne nor the regal title, and would at any time be ready to execute a written abdication of his claims, and retire and live as a private citizen, if he could by such a course insure the prosperity of the people."

On the occasion of a dinner-party at Mr. Laborde's, in honor of the prince, the whole plan was revealed to Madame Pfeiffer.. A complete little arsenal was shown her, of sabers, daggers, pistols, and guns, and leather shirts of mail, for the use of the conspirators. The chief actors were to dine at Mr. Laborde's garden-house, on the eventful evening, in order to know that all was complete, and were to return to their homes as from a feast; then, at two o'clock, repair to the palace, when the gates were to be opened by the chief of the army,

and the assembled princes and nobles were at a given signal loudly to proclaim Prince Rakoto king. Cannon were to be fired to announce to the people the change in the government, and the queen was to be informed that it was the will of the nobles and the people.

Madame Pfeiffer was a brave woman; and though she knew that in case of failure her own life would be forfeited, and that no door of escape remained for her, she waited with unflinching courage for the *coup d'etat.* Mr. Laborde proposed to send her thirty miles into the country in company with the two priests, who were to go on the day previous to the event; but she preferred to remain in Tananarivo; for, said she, "it would not be difficult to find my head, even if I were a hundred miles from the capital."

There were already so many in the secret that the little news-birds began to drop bits of gossip all over the town, concerning something mysterious soon to come to pass. Dark hints of it reached the queen, and, upon Mr. Lambert becoming very ill, she consulted the sikidy as to whether he had any designs against her, and the reply was, "If Mr. Lambert had any such evil design the fever would assuredly carry him off."

He recovered, and for a few days her fears were quieted.

The twentieth of June, the designated day, arrived, with the plot still unexposed. The dinner-party at Mr. Laborde's awaited the news of complete arrangements in anxious suspense. The chief minister, who was to have secured the opening of the palace-gates, sent a message that he had failed to obtain the appointment of loyal officers to fill the posts at the palace that night, and insisted upon deferring the attempt. To defer it was to be betrayed, and to be betrayed was almost certain death to all concerned. The prince sent messenger after messenger, commanding and entreating him to risk every thing, and open the gates. He refused. Rakoto and his friends were pained and dismayed. They felt that all was lost. The timidity and self-interest, if not the treachery of the chief, was about to ruin them. Perhaps, after all, he preferred the rule of the queen; for she granted him the services of eight hundred of her subjects, without pay from herself or from him, and these were already dragging stones and trees to build him a house. Rakoto, he knew, had the intention to deal justly with his subjects, and abate, if not put an end to every form of slavery and oppression.

However this may be, he had effectually destroyed the hopes and plans of Rakoto and his friends, and they could only wait for what the day might bring forth. It had been difficult to overcome the irresolution and delays of the prince himself, who had some filial hesitation about usurping his mother's power, though feeling so bitterly her misuse of it. Added to this, they were surrounded by enemies, who were committed to the interests of the cousin and rival of the prince. Certainly God did not intend to deliver his people in this way.

Instead of being summoned to the vengeance of the queen the next day, as was expected, a message came from her, requesting Madame Pfeiffer and Mr. Lambert to come to the palace and entertain her Majesty with some new fancy dances! But madame felt herself too aged and too ill "to turn ballet-dancer," and Mr. Lambert was again suffering from fever. Both declined. The day following, they were told that the whole plot was known to the queen; and, though the actors were not yet fully implicated, the Europeans were treated as state prisoners, and remained for days shut up in Mr. Laborde's house, not daring to venture into the presence of the people. The queen issued a command forbidding any person to

accuse her son, on pain of death. Her love for Prince Rakoto rose above every other consideration, and she probably regarded him as spell-bound by some secret charm of the Europeans. How to screen him and punish the rest, was the question of moment that lulled the palace into a seeming quiet which was only the precursor of coming vengeance.

To add to the terror of suspense, a traitor who had united himself long enough with the Christians to know their condition, their secret meetings, their numbers, and even to obtain a list of their names, carried this information to one of the queen's ministers, who was providentially one of Prince Rakoto's best friends. He immediately gave the list to the prince, who tore it in pieces, and announced that any one who should repeat the offense should be put to death. This afforded opportunity for the escape of thousands to the forests and caves, and of some from the island. The occurrence determined the queen in what way to wreak her anger upon a people who dared to wish to remove her from the throne. Upon them fell all the odium of the conspiracy.

On the morning of the third of July, the people were summoned to assemble to hear the will of the queen. The calling of a "kabary" was in

the people's eyes a call to death. "There was a general howling and wailing," says Madame Pfeiffer, "a rushing and running through the streets, as if the town had been attacked by a hostile army; and, as if to strengthen that belief, all entrances to the town were occupied by troops, and the poor people were torn forcibly from their houses and driven to the market-place."

Mr. Laborde ventured to go and hear the proclamation, which proved to be all that the people expected. The queen announced that she had heard with horror that thousands of Christians dwelt in the capital and vicinity. Fifteen days were allowed them, in which to accuse themselves. If accused by others, they should be put to death in a horrible manner. They knew very well if they accused themselves, the "tender mercies" of the tyrant would punish them with nothing lighter than perpetual slavery and chains. Unhappily, the names of some were known through the discovery of letters from a missionary, lately received, and these were consigned to torture, in order to make them accuse others. More than two hundred were discovered or accused during three days, but when the soldiers proceeded to the villages in quest of others, they found that the

inhabitants had fled. One village, nine miles from the capital, was wholly deserted.

Mr. Lambert continued extremely ill of fever, and the queen sent daily to inquire as to his health, not by any means as a compliment, but because the sikidy had declared that his death would be positive proof of guilt, and, in that case, his companions must suffer the consequences. The messengers were required to see him with their own eyes, lest deception like that she had practiced at Radama's death might cover the misfortune. Prince Rakoto was not allowed to visit the house, being kept a prisoner at his mother's side, on pretence of guarding her from danger, and also to hide his participation in the conspiracy — as if every body did not know it already! But Ranavalona determined not to know it, and meant to cover him with her motherly wings from the vengeance of the heathen party. He kept his friends informed by secret messengers of all that transpired at the palace. A treble guard secured the palace; no one was allowed to pass near it, and none but known friends to the government were allowed to enter it. The people were forbidden on pain of death to enter Mr. Laborde's house, and he no longer dared venture beyond his own threshold.

As the blood-thirsty queen could not secure as

many victims as she wished, another "kabary" was ordered, and the people were told that whoever helped Christians in their flight, or concealed them, should receive punishment. A reward was offered for the delivery of any. Fifteen hundred soldiers were sent to distant provinces to arrest the fugitives, and to secure several Catholic missionaries who had lately established themselves on the coast. Prince Rakoto sent a faithful courier to warn them of their danger. He also informed the Europeans at Mr. Laborde's, by secret messages, that their papers were to be searched, and that the queen and her ministers were consulting daily in what manner to punish them, so as to gratify their fury, and yet not expose themselves to the retaliation of England and France.

While suffering extreme anxiety as to their fate, a party of officers arrived, as was supposed for their arrest. What was their astonishment to find that it was a deputation sent for the presents which Mr. Lambert had brought for the queen! Accordingly the elegant dresses, elaborate uniforms, all manner of costly apparel, a rich saddle-cloth, saddle and bridle for Prince Rakoto, and other articles, all gifts from Mr. Lambert himself, were delivered to the delighted party. Yet the strictness of their imprisonment was not one whit

abated. Their sight was shocked by barbarities, and their ears horrified with the cruelties hourly taking place. A poor woman had her backbone sawed asunder in the market-place, and in a village where six Christians had concealed themselves, with the knowledge of the people, "the whole population — men, women, and children — were bound and dragged to the capital." The queen had declared "that the bowels of the earth must be searched, and the rivers and the lakes dragged with nets," till every Christian in her dominions had been destroyed. And, through it all, Prince Rakoto, and those of the ministers and nobles who were Christians in secret, dared to unbind the captives and bid them fly, so that thousands by their vigilance were able to escape to the mountains and forests. What misery lay before them in their wretched concealment! And yet, for Christ's sake, it was borne with a magnanimity which proves that pure religion is able to bring the most degraded up to a noble manhood. And those who in spite of all efforts were borne to an awful death, who on the way to execution were continually thrust with spears and stoned — these "behaved with great fortitude, and sung hymns till they died." Think of this as occurring in 1857!

After thirteen days of terrible suspense, the

Europeans were summoned to the court-yard of the palace, to hear the will of the queen in regard to them. Upon arriving, they found the judges and officers gloomily wrapped in their wide lambas, sitting in a semi-circle, and behind them were soldiers standing.

"I think our last hour is come," whispered Madame Pfeiffer to Mr. Laborde.

"I am prepared for every thing," was his reply.

They were seated opposite the judges. One arose, enumerated their offenses, and delivered the sentence. They were charged with "intending to overturn the throne of their beloved ruler, to give the people equal rights with the nobility, and to abolish slavery;" also, with having had interviews with the Christians, and exhorting them "to hold fast to their faith, and to expect speedy succor." It was stated that "the whole population of Tananarivo was clamoring for their death," but that the queen, "in her magnanimity and mercy, had limited their punishment to perpetual banishment from her territories." This was indeed mercy, but not the queen's. She would long ago have consigned them to a barbarous death, but for the interference of her beloved son. He had daily defended them with the greatest energy and warmth, and alarmed her fears by the threat that the

"European powers would not allow the execution of six important persons to pass unpunished!"

They were to be allowed an escort of fifty soldiers, and as many bearers as were needed; the presents were to be returned, and one hour was granted, in which to prepare and set out. Mr. Laborde was to have a similar escort, and was to keep a day's journey in the rear. In consideration of the services he had rendered to Madagascar, he was permitted to take his personal property with him, the remainder reverting to the queen. Many of the presents were returned to Mr. Lambert, but the rest were retained by the officers, probably without the knowledge of the queen. There was slowness on the part of the officials in setting out, and this enabled Mr. Lambert to secure the most valuable of his effects. When at last the train was in motion, they went with blithe hearts, though both Mr. Lambert and Madame Pfeiffer were suffering from the debilitating fever peculiar to Madagascar. They were too happy to be permitted to take their heads out of Tananarivo. It was just eight weeks since they had entered the place.

Their journey proved that, after all, they had overrated the clemency of the cunning sovereign. Fifty soldiers were not sent as an escort of honor,

neither was Mr. Laborde kept in the distance without reason. The first Radama had often said in his lifetime, that he had two generals to whose skill he was willing to commit his enemies, without doubt of victory — General Hazo, *forest*, and General Tazo, *fever*. It was to see that the offenders were helplessly exposed to these that they were so generously attended. Queen Ranavalona had no idea of permitting them to escape so easily from her vengeance, and the commanding officer had accordingly received orders to detain them as long as possible in the unhealthy districts, to give them no aid, and to guard them so strictly that they should not communicate with or receive assistance from any native, or even a European. This programme was strictly carried out. Eight days had latterly been the limit of a journey from the capital to the coast; but, by careful management, by waiting in fever districts, and by slow marches, the time was extended to fifty-three days. Madame Pfeiffer was so prostrated by fever that she remained for days in a kind of stupor, from which she had no desire to arouse herself, — an apathy and indifference felt by the strongest when subject to the Madagascar malady.

Mr. Lambert suffered almost equally. Some-

times they were left for days in mud huts, the whole party crowded into one miserable room; and, again, were dragged forth and forced to continue their journey through rain or heat, as it happened. At one time they were left eighteen days in a village surrounded by swamps, and no offers of money from Mr. Lambert could induce their tormentors to proceed. A French physician, lately arrived, was at one of the villages through which they passed, but, notwithstanding all entreaties, they were not permitted to communicate with him or receive medical assistance. Thus they reached Tamatave, and, still under strict guard, waited for a ship to convey them to Mauritius. Happily, one was ready the third day. They embarked with joy at their wonderful deliverance from death, and from the horrible meshes of the net in which the wily queen knew so well how to entangle her victims. And while they sail joyfully away, we too must lose sight of Madagascar as it drops away in the mist of the boundary of sea and sky, and leave, for four years longer, the Christians to drink that cup of bitterness, and receive that baptism of blood, of which Jesus warned his disciples when he was with them; and we must wait till the queen's

measure of wickedness is full to the brim, and be content to leave her to the King of kings, who can hear the cry of his own people, and who has said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay."

CHAPTER XI.

ACCESSION OF RADAMA II.

Death of Queen Ranavalona — Joy of the People — Abolition of all the persecuting Laws — Reappearance of the Christians — Missionaries sent for — Messrs. LeBrun and Johns arrive — Rev. Mr. Ellis and Missionaries from England — Reopening of Schools — Embassies from the British and French Governments — Radama's Coronation — Rejoicings — Building of new Churches.

Joy! joy to poor, chained Madagascar! God has at last sent his messenger, death, to call Queen Ranavalona to judgment. Her will, which could never bear opposition, yields to the awful summons. Her spirit is led away in a captivity as helpless as the poorest slave she has crushed. The crown and scepter are removed from the fallen queen, and her dust is laid away powerless in the sepulcher.

Rakoto-Radama is proclaimed king. The sound echoes through the land! The people among the mountains take up the happy tidings, and ring it forth to the hills, till it reaches into the depths of the forests and caves as though Jesus had called, "Arise and come forth!" The fugitives emerge from their living graves, the prison-doors are

opened as if by shining angels, and the laborers, bowed down in the highways, lift their hands and shake their falling chains, and cry out in joy at the deliverance. The sound goes echoing and re-echoing down the steeps and over the plains. The people send forth songs of deliverance that are heard far away over the seas by listeners in other lands. These take up the hymn of thanksgiving, and Christians of every nation unite in a joyful *Te Deum* of praise.

Queen Ranavalona had reigned thirty-three years. She was proclaimed sovereign August 1, 1828, and died August 23, 1861. According to custom, the time of mourning was one year, and the coronation of the new king and queen could not take place till this respect had been paid to the memory of the former ruler. An unsuccessful attempt to usurp the rights of Rakoto was made, immediately upon the death of the queen, by his cousin, Prince Ramboasalama, who had a strong party in his interest. He was, however, seized, forced to take the oath of allegiance, and, without further molestation, RADAMA II. appointed his ministers, and announced the policy of the new government. All restrictions upon commerce were abolished, and foreigners were allowed free access to the capital. All state prisoners were re-

called from banishment; prisoners of war were set free, and sent home with presents; liberty of conscience was allowed to all; cruel laws were repealed; the trial by the tangena abolished; in a word, the old code of laws was entirely swept away at a stroke. The land reveled in joyous freedom, and the only fear now in the hearts of those who regarded the best welfare of Madagascar, was, lest anarchy might take the place of oppression, and prove ruinous to its prosperity. Whether the king had sufficient decision of character and clearness of judgment to secure the correct balance between lawless liberty and unjust restraint, remained to be proved. In the mean time, his friends hoped for the best, and rejoiced in the deliverance from bondage.

The Christians, who were supposed by their persecutors to be almost rooted out, sprang up every where like countless blades of grass after a spring shower. "We that were in concealment appeared," writes a native pastor, a short time after the queen's death. "Then all the people were astonished when they saw we were alive and not yet buried nor eaten by dogs, and there were a great many of the people desiring to see us, for they considered us as dead,—and this is what astonished them. Ten days later, those that were

in fetters came to Tananarivo, but they could not walk on account of the weight of their heavy fetters, and their weak and feeble bodies."

Bibles and books were also brought out from their hiding-places, but were almost useless from having been so long buried. One man had succeeded in concealing his Bible upon his person during eighteen years. He had frequently been in danger of his life, but had trusted with undisturbed peace in the promises of God, which he had committed to memory. "Be not afraid of the king of Babylon of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the Lord: for I am with you, to save you, and to deliver you from his hand." Such words as these gave him strength to endure and wait.

Radama encouraged the Christians by walking with them in procession all the way from his country palace to the city, causing them to sing hymns as they went. His chief minister gave them a house next his own for a chapel, but this soon became too small for the number of worshipers, which daily increased. The king advised them to write for missionaries to instruct them; accordingly, a month after his accession, four native pastors addressed a letter to Rev. Mr. LeBrun, who had for four or more years been waiting at Mauritius

for an opportunity to devote himself to this very work. It is thus that the Heavenly Father prepares blessings for his people, and is ready to pour out upon them more than they know how to receive.

"We have begun," say they, "to meet for public worship at Tananarivo since Lord's Day, 29th of September last. As one house was not large enough to contain us all, we had to meet in eleven separate houses, and they were all crowded to excess. The king, Radama II., tells us to write and persuade the missionaries to come and settle at Tananarivo, as well as all our friends and countrymen who are at Mauritius. There is now no obstacle in the way; the road is open to everybody. Every one can pray in all security; the Word of God has free course in our midst. Bring, therefore, with you, all sorts of Malagasy books, — the Bible, the New Testament, tracts and alphabets, yea, every thing printed in the Malagasy language; for everybody here scrambles as it were for the Word of God; so ardent is the desire expressed for it that they throw themselves upon any portions they find!

"French Roman Catholic priests have already reached Tananarivo, and use every means to instruct the people in their own religion. Pray ar-

dently to the Lord that he may prevent any of us who are Protestants at heart, from being tempted to listen to their teachings. Everybody, young and old, is learning to read. All the Christians who were in bonds have received their liberty, and are living at the capital. Such is a brief statement of our present position. Salutations. Adieu. May God bless us all, and you as well as us, say

"RATSILAINGA,

"RANDRIANTSOA,

"RAINIKETAKA,

"ANDRIAMELO,

"And the Brethren and Sisters in Christ."

In reply to this appeal, Rev. Mr. LeBrun and David Johns, who had been driven from the capital twenty-five years before, came to Tananarivo, not to take up the work where it had then been left, but to find themselves in charge of a vast church gathered by the power of the Holy Spirit in those long dark years, and pervaded with a fervor and holy devotion that astonished them and all who came afterward, impressing them with a sense of God's presence that was almost overwhelming.

As soon as the happy news reached England, Rev. Mr. Ellis was sent by the London Society to take charge of the mission, and he was soon fol-

lowed by a party of six missionaries, including a physician and experienced teachers, who brought with them a gift of over ten thousand copies of the New Testament, and portions of the Old; over twenty thousand other volumes in the Malagasy language, and a printing press, types, and paper. These friends were received with honor by the king's officers, at some distance from the capital, and Christians busied themselves in preparing houses, and bringing generous supplies of provisions, in token of the happy good-will and the affection they had for those who were one with them in Christ. The Christian alone can understand the hearty sympathy and interest which moved these people, and bound them to strangers whose faces they had not yet seen.

By direction of Radama, schools were opened in all the villages where they had formerly been, and also at the capital. He went, himself, daily to see the progress of a large school-house which was being built in the city. The young men who surrounded him were instructed by Mr. Ellis; one of them, who was among the highest officers of the army, learned his alphabet in a single lesson. It was evidently the king's desire to see his people educated rapidly.

A number of Europeans had by this time arrived

in Madagascar. The Bishop of Mauritius came to see for himself whether the rumors of the state of the Christians were exaggerated. The sight of the martyrs' bones still bleaching upon the rocks; the heavy chains and rings that had been worn by some who still survived and bore the marks of the galling weight; the devotion of many who sometimes, in their joy at obtaining the use of his Bible, prayed and read all night; and the multitudes which "pressed him upon all sides" when he attempted to address them, as well as the humble desire of the king to promote all that was good, filled him with glowing enthusiasm, and sent him away praising God for what he had wrought.

Embassies from France and England also came to congratulate and encourage Radama in his liberal policy, and an autograph letter from Queen Victoria aided to sustain and strengthen his efforts. All these were received with a very different air from that which marked the receptions of Queen Ranavalona. Instead of appearing in haughty reserve on the lofty balcony, King Radama welcomed his guests in the palace, surrounded by his ministers and ladies of the court, listened with interest to their addresses, and often shook them cordially by the hand. The offering of the *hasina* was still received in token of amity and respect,

according to the former customs, though it does not seem to have been so absolutely exacted as in the reign of the queen. Neither did Radama keep his friends in waiting for days, before granting an audience.

The day following the arrival of the missionaries, being the Sabbath, the king and queen met them in the chapel. "May God bless you, and preserve you in comfort here," was the cordial salutation of the king. He repeatedly expressed his gratification at their arrival, and the benefits which would ensue to the people. In a conversation held with the missionaries and members of the embassy, the compassion of Queen Victoria toward the poor and afflicted, and Radama's conduct toward the persecuted, were compared. In reply, he said, looking for approval to his friend, "Mr. Ellis knows what is in my heart; he knows that I desire to know and serve God. I pray to God to enlighten my mind and teach me what is right, and what I ought to know and do."

Radama appeared to place unlimited confidence in Mr. Ellis. When the English embassy was on the way to the capital, it was told him that General Johnstone was coming to crown him. "The French say they are to put the crown on my head," said he; "now the English say they are

coming for that purpose. They can't both do it, for I have not got two heads for each of them to crown. Go and ask my father, Mr. Ellis, what I am to do." Although it was early in the morning Mr. Ellis hastened to answer the summons, and found him, as was usual in the early part of the day, busily engaged with his ministers. He explained to him that the respective parties merely desired to honor the event of his coronation, and that the act of crowning should be performed by those of his own nation.

The joyful day of the coronation arrived. It was the twenty-third of September, little more than a year since the death of the queen. At an early hour a crowd of people, on foot and in palanquins, pressed along the road that led to the plain below the city. "Banners inscribed with 'R. R. II.' were fixed on both sides of the road, at intervals of about every hundred yards; and tall green plantain-trees had, during the previous day, been brought from the adjacent gardens, and planted in groups of five or six together by the side of the way." The rocky hills that rose precipitously from the plain in various directions, were alive with people who were creeping up their sides, to obtain a view of the coronation; and the steep side of the long granite hill of Tananarivo, that

overlooked the scene, was gay with men and women in their long white or brilliant colored lambas, eagerly watching for the coming of their beloved king. Below them extended a platform, upon which was fixed the throne. The royal family and foreign guests sat upon the right and left. Among the former was Rasalimo, the wife of the former Radama, whose marriage with him had sealed his peace with the Sakalavas, and who was the only wife then recognized by the missionaries. The handsome young Ramonja and the princely son of Rambosalama were conspicuous, among the noblemen. All were in rich uniforms of scarlet or green velvet and gold lace.

In front of the platform, upon one side, was arrayed a great body of Christians. Mr. Ellis and the young nobles, his pupils, together with the missionaries and native pastors, were in front of this army of disciples, which so far exceeded the space allotted them that more than half their number were necessarily excluded. On the other side, facing the throne, was a group of Catholic priests, with the few people who had listened to their instructions. They had labored at the capital ever since the accession of Radama, but found it difficult to attach the people to their faith. As the natives had said long before, they were too strongly

reminded of the idols just thrown away, and now after a year's faithful labor, one of the priests was constrained to acknowledge "one might just as well attempt to cut a rock with a razor as attempt to make Roman Catholics of the Malagasy!" Yet they did not despair of influencing the children, and, in proof of it, several Sisters of Charity, with about forty children and elder girls, were grouped behind the priests.

Between these representatives of the Romish Church and the platform was another group, tolerated by the liberality of the king. Thirteen idol-keepers and a few adherents stood there, holding aloft, and in a place of equal honor with the ministers of Christ, thirteen idols! It seems impossible to believe it, and yet it is quietly recorded by an eye-witness. How could Radama's friends have permitted the scarlet symbols of idolatry to float in the very face of Christianity, without protesting against it, and reminding the king of God's command, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me?"

But the vast multitude turn their faces now toward the cloud that rises out of the city, and signifies the moving of the royal cavalcade. The cannon booms, and the long train winds down the hill, still enveloped in a cloud of dust. A crowd

comes before, shouting their joy; the people join in the applause, as they catch sight of the royal pair; and the Christians unite their voices in the national anthem, which peals a hearty welcome across the plain. There, out of the cloud of dust, gleams the scarlet palanquin of the queen. She sits within it, robed in white satin, and beside her is a little girl, an adopted daughter. By the side of the palanquin rides King Radama, in the uniform of a field-marshal, mounted upon a fine Arab horse. Guards clothed in green, and bearing silver halberts attend them, and closely following are the ministers and officers of the court in gorgeous dresses, and the officers of the English and French embassies in court dress.

As the sovereigns approach, the royal family near the throne turn their faces toward them, clap their hands, and sing native songs; and now the queen alights, and advances to the throne, erected beneath a canopy and over the sacred stone, where Queen Ranavalona so many years before announced her trust in idols. The king follows. The officers in rich uniforms, and among them the minister of justice in a robe of green velvet and gold lace, with two train-bearers, leisurely take their respective positions. The shouting and clapping and singing cease; every eye is fixed upon the king as

he rises, takes the crown, places it upon his head, and advances to the sight of the multitude, — the crowned king, Radama II. As he stands there, cannons roar out the tidings to the people gathered on the hills; the band peal forth the national hymn, and the great multitude shout the Malagasy salutation, "May you live a thousand years!"

Now Radama turns to the queen, standing at his side, and places an open-work golden crown upon her head. The shoutings still reverberate; the officers come forward to offer their congratulations, and the queen resumes her seat. The acclamations are hushed. Radama again advances and addresses the people, "assuring them that his confidence in and toward them, that his purpose for the welfare of his country and the prosperity of all classes, were the same as when he was raised to the throne." There is genuine happiness in the upturned faces of the listening people, for they know these are not the smooth words of deceit, such as were uttered by the last crowned sovereign, and they can not shout their joy loud enough to satisfy their hearts, as the king resumes his seat. The ceremony of the *hasina* finishes the formalities of the coronation, and the crowd rushes to and fro, to get nearer the royal pair, as they descend from the canopied throne and pre-

pare to return to the palace. All the way back the surging multitude shout and sing and gaze at royalty, till the pageant disappears in the court-yard of the palace. Within the palace is a banquet waiting, and there the day is finished in festivities.

When the reign of Radama was thus established, the Christians began to consult upon measures for organizing their forces, and building churches large enough for convenient worship. They were now holding services in houses scattered over the city, and these poorly accommodated their numbers. As the most of these people had been robbed of their property during many years of persecution, it was impossible to meet the expense themselves; an appeal was therefore made by the missionaries to the British public, for the means to erect four churches "on the several sites where the martyrs nobly died for the faith of Christ." These memorial churches are probably now in the course of erection, if not already completed.

CHAPTER XII.

RADAMA'S DISSIPATION AND DEATH.

Disappointment of Hopes — The King's Love of Reveling and Intemperance — Influenced by evil Companions — Jealousy of a Divine Rival — Superstitions — The Mena-Maso — Message from his Ancestors to stop the praying — The Heathen Plot to secure the Assassination of the Christians — Radama's proposed Law of immunity to Murderers — His Ministers alarmed — Troops summoned to resist the King's purpose — He is put to death in his Palace by the Nobles — Ruined by his Vices — Accession of Queen Rabodo to the Throne.

It is with great pain that we are compelled to record the blighting of the hopes which the amiable disposition of Prince Rakoto, and his friendly offices toward the Christians during the long night of persecution had awakened respecting him. Gladly would we record that his reign so auspiciously begun, proved worthy of a Christian prince. But alas, Rakoto, now Radama II., was not a Christian. We have already stated that even while winning so many hearts by his natural amiability, he was still a heathen, licentious, and in many respects, weak. To this was now added intemperance. Being frequently in conference with him, and familiar with all his habits, it could not have escaped the notice of Mr. Ellis that Ra-

dama indulged in midnight banquetings with the young nobles who surrounded him. Nightly revels were so common among the Malagasy, whether rich or poor, and wine had always flowed so freely in the palace, though prohibited elsewhere, that its present use was perhaps not so readily remarked. The customs of courtly society in requiring the wine-cup, might also have prevented any one from presuming to warn the king of the danger of indulging in that which had ruined the former Radama; or perhaps the fact that he had never distinctly declared himself a disciple of Christ, may have hindered his Christian friends from enjoining the duty of temperance on that ground. Of a lively and generous temperament, he sought the advice and companionship of inexperienced and dissipated young men. He was easy and amiable to a fault; readily influenced by those who once gained his good-will and confidence. This pliability of character, and his extreme tenderness of heart, made him too free and lenient to be strictly just. He forbade the punishment of persons convicted even of crime; and this extreme course threatened to overturn all law and order. The older councilors of the government shook their heads ominously. But as it was an amiable and not a vicious fault, and was the re-

sult of a sickened weariness of cruelty, his friends hoped for the best.

The full extent of his faults was not known at this time. It was not known that after attending divine worship with apparent seriousness, he would excite the mirth of his frivolous young companions by mimicking the peculiarities of the preacher, and that after giving audience to foreigners with the utmost courtesy, he would permit them to be ridiculed in his presence, and would join in the merriment prevailing at their expense. His mobile character, quick to catch every impression seemed incapable of giving such a lodgment to good impressions as should allow them to fructify. He believed in God, but troubled himself little to ascertain what relations the Saviour bears to God. Whoever Christ might be, he seemed convinced that he was below himself, whom he reckoned the second being in the universe. But with these blasphemously exaggerated conceptions of his own dignity, it is not strange that he, when on the throne, soon began to be jealous of having even a Divine rival in the hearts of his people. He was heard to complain that when any one became a Christian, his heart was at once turned away from him. But for awhile these things remained unknown, or privately suspected. The Christians

were content with their king, and happy in the freedom and encouragement he granted them.

It soon became apparent that superstition was gaining the ascendency over the mind of Radama. Dreams and supernatural wonders influenced him more than any argument that could be presented, and he confirmed his own opinions of right by the invariable announcement, "God told me so." Of this weakness the heathen party took advantage.

Radama employed thirty or forty persons as spies, and these constantly surrounded him, bringing intelligence of all that was transpiring among friends or enemies. The inquisitors who sat in judgment upon this secret intelligence were called *mena maso*, *i. e.* "because their eyes were supposed to be red with the strain or continuance of difficult investigation." Many of these were easily secured to the interests of the idol-keepers, and such information was given them for the secret ear of the king, as served to increase his awe for the supernatural.

A mental epidemic began to appear in the capital and the adjoining provinces. Persons affected by it pretended to be unable to avoid leaping, runing, and dancing, as did the idol-keeper who once appeared in the presence of Radama. Had Rakoto-Radama exposed these impostors with the

same boldness and sarcasm with which Radama I. shamed them, the unhappy consequences might even now have been averted. So far from this, the king listened to the accounts brought by the *mena maso*, and was filled with wonder. Visions and strange dreams were related to him. Voices announced the coming of his ancestors to tell him what he was to do for the good of his country. When his imagination was thus sufficiently worked upon for the idolators to venture on bolder proceedings, a message was sent as from his ancestors, that if he did not stop "*the praying*" he might expect a great calamity. Here was a blow aimed at the Christians! They saw plainly whither it tended. Could it be possible that God would again permit them to be cast into the dust?

The king was deeply moved. The frantic actors in the strange drama thronged daily to the palace, delivered messages from the spirit-world, sounding continually in his ears the command, "Stop the praying." Persons under the same influence, instigated by idol-keepers, poured in from the country, and added to the cry, "Stop the praying." Radama was alarmed, and to conciliate the spirits, issued an order that all persons meeting these "so-called sick," should take off their hats; thus offering them the same token of respect as was formerly

paid to idols. Here was another blow against the Christians!

And now the plotters grew bolder. The king's ministers and the chief nobles had firmly opposed him in so weakly yielding to the demands of these creatures, who seemed possessed by the Evil One. Their assassination was proposed to Radama; and he consented! To shield the intended murderers "he announced his intention to issue an order, or law, that any person or persons wishing to fight with fire-arms, swords, or spears, should not be prevented, and that if any one was killed, the murderer should not be punished." This occasioned intense excitement and alarm through the city. No one was certain of his life. All lost confidence in the king, in whom they had so firmly reposed their trust for liberty, happiness, and the rising glory of Madagascar.

"On the 7th of May (1863)," says Mr. Ellis, "Radama repeated before his ministers and others his determination to issue the order (of murder), and among all the *mena maso* present, only three opposed the issuing of that order; many were silent; the rest expressed their approval. The nobles and heads of the people spent the day in deliberating on the course they should pursue; and the next morning the prime minister, with

about one hundred of the nobles and heads of the people, including the commander-in-chief, the king's treasurer, and the first officer of the palace, went to the king, and remonstrated against legalizing murder, and besought him most earnestly not to make such an order. It is said that the prime minister went on his knees before him, and begged him not to issue this obnoxious law; but he remained unmoved. The minister then arose and said to the king, —

"'Do you say, before all these witnesses, that if any man is going to fight with fire-arms, sword, or spear, that you will not prevent him, and that, if he kill any one, he shall not be punished?' The king replied, 'I agree to that.'

"Then said the minister, 'It is enough; we must arm;' and turning to his followers, said, 'Let us return.'

"I saw the long procession as they passed my house, grave and silent, on their way to the minister's dwelling."

All day, while they sat in deliberation, the people waited in trying suspense, and when their intention to oppose the king with violence was made known, and when troops began to pour into the city at nightfall, women, children, and slaves hastily gathered their valuables and fled from the

town. By daybreak, Tananarivo and every avenue leading to it, was in possession of the army; and the few soldiers who remained with the king, refused to fire upon those surrounding the palace. Even among the people, none were found willing to defend Radama in his strange measures. The *mena maso* alone supported him. All but twelve had been already arrested and killed, or had fled, and the surrender of these was now demanded. At first, the king refused; but finding himself helpless, he consented, on condition that their lives should be spared. "On Monday, the 11th, they were marched by Andohalo, on their way to the spot where the irons were to be fixed to their limbs." Thus was the Scripture verified, "They shall fall into their own pit."

Radama had declared to his ministers that "he alone was sovereign; his word alone was law; his person was sacred; he was supernaturally protected; and would severely punish the opposers of his will." This decided his fate. The morning after his adherents had been secured, he was put to death in his own palace by the nobles, and in presence of Rabodo, the queen, who vainly endeavored to save him.

Thus perished Rakoto-Radama, who, as a prince, had shown many admirable traits and evil propen-

sities so evenly balanced that it was a matter of anxiety whether the evil or good should triumph. "No man can serve two masters;" and, as he failed to choose Christ, the foundation of all goodness, he soon committed himself to the interests of Satan, and became the easy tool of wicked designers. While we stand in awe of the judgments of an offended God, we can not but feel painful regret that the lot of this amiable prince should have fallen in evil places. Possibly his intense abhorrence of cruelty, and the forced witnessing of it through many years, may have unsettled his reason; and the pressure of the cares of state, and the peculiar influence of the *mena maso*, together with intemperance, may have increased the unhappy state of mind. The gospel could have saved him from false steps, had its instructions taken root in his heart. But Radama, when "almost a Christian," dallied with vices till they took possession of him, tolerated idols whose votaries accomplished his fall, and at last chose the faith of his ancestors, which, instead of granting the peaceful death promised to the upright, occasioned him an ignominious end. "Woe unto them that call evil good, ... that are wise in their own eyes, ... that are mighty to drink wine . . . . that justify the wicked, and take away the righteous-

ness of the righteous: Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust." Isaiah v. 20–24.

The sovereignty of Madagascar was offered to the queen, on condition of her signing a constitution which secures the rights of the nobles and heads of the people, protects foreigners, tolerates Christianity, secures the commercial interests of the people, and establishes trial by jury. It was also stipulated "that the queen shall not drink strong liquors;" thus showing unmistakably what is presumed to have destroyed Radama. To all this, she gave her full consent, and now reigns, Queen of Madagascar. Her people present the remarkable spectacle of being as far in advance of their sovereign in Christian civilization, as their king was in advance of them, thirty-five years before. They now dictate measures of progress. Much is hoped for the nation, in this advance toward a constitutional government. May the Gospel, which has been so illustriously exhibited there, soon reach every benighted spot in that beautiful island, cause every idol to be cast into the sea, and so renovate the nation that they shall stand before the world as a chosen, blessed, and sanctified people of God!

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